

# Connecticut Common School Journal.

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The publication of this number redeems the promise which we entered into with our subscribers, in issuing the first number of the present volume of the Connecticut Common School Journal. We shall however issue one or two numbers in addition, so as to embrace such documents relating to common schools as may be published by order of the Legislature of 1840. This number however will be the last in which we shall have an opportunity of conferring with our subscribers, and we shall therefore avail ourselves of it, to say a few words, which can be more appropriately said here than anywhere else, respecting the connection of a periodical of this character, with the cause of common school improvement in this State.

The experience of two years, devoted to the one great object of advancing the interest of common education in Connecticut, in which time we have had an opportunity of consulting with teachers, school officers, and parents, in almost every school society in the State, has satisfied us that the great want of all classes in reference to sure and rapid advance in school improvement, is *light*, is information, as to the condition and deficiencies of existing education with us, and the means and the processes of improving it. It has been the aim of this Journal to diffuse this light—to gather information from every accessible source, and scatter it as far and as fast as we could. We have spared no honorable effort to get subscribers; but have not limited our circulation to them. In order to make it somewhat useful, we have expended on the matter contained in it, and in gratuitous circulation, nearly two thirds of all the compensation which the law has allowed us for as faithful service, as we are capable of rendering in any capacity. Of this we do not complain—we have no right to complain; for the labor of conducting the paper and all the expenses connected with its publication, over and above such co-operation as was pledged from a few devoted and liberal minded friends\* of school improvement, were cheerfully assumed. Besides it has been our aim so to conduct it as to lift our motives in engaging in this work, above the suspicion of pecuniary gain.

There is, however, a large compensatory account to be considered. It has in some measure subserved the object to promote which it was established. If any reliance can be placed on the testimony of teachers, school officers and parents, on the awakening interest in every thing that relates to school improvement, wherever the journal has been taken and read, on the judicious repairs of old school houses, and the building of spacious and commodious new ones after plans recommended in these columns, in the numerous letters addressed every week for information how to get rid of the leading defects in the arrangement, the classification, the various studies and books, the incompetent and constantly changing teachers, &c. now existing in the schools, then this Journal has done some good.

Besides, through our columns official documents, and Reports relating to the condition of popular education in Eu-

rope\* and the United States, and the efforts making, or recently made, to advance it, have been widely disseminated all over the State.

To conclude, we would say, that a Journal of this character is indispensable to rapid and sure progress in school improvement—that the present circulation will not authorize its continued publication, and that however large may be its individual subscription list, it is necessary that it should reach every teacher, and the clerk of every school district and school society in the State, for the use of all persons entrusted with the administration of the school system—and to accomplish this other means than those which the Secretary of the Board of Commissioners of common schools has at his command, are necessary.

\*For instance we have published the substance of Cousin's Report on the school system of Prussia—Prof. Stowe's Report on the course of instruction in the elementary schools of Europe, which was originally published by the Legislature of Ohio, and subsequently reprinted by order of the Legislature of Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and other States, the Annual Reports of the Superintendent of common schools in Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York, and Massachusetts, which with all their valuable suggestions, would hardly have been known in Connecticut but for their publication in the Journal. These documents are valuable in themselves, and especially as showing the vigorous efforts now making elsewhere, to improve the moral and intellectual training of the whole people, and which must eventuate, if they have not already done, in placing the common school system of other states above our own.

## MODES OF INSTRUCTION IN COMMON SCHOOLS

### ADAPTED PARTICULARLY TO SUMMER SCHOOLS.

The following thoughts and suggestions, the result of many years teaching in every form of common schools, from those of central populous villages, and those of the more remote parts of country towns—are particularly designed for the female teachers of our summer schools. They may afford hints, however, to teachers of the elementary branches, of every form and grade of school, from the infant school to the university. Parents, moreover, who have any thing to do with the *instruction* of their children—and those who have not, ought to have—may possibly derive occasional hints which may be useful to them in the discharge of the duties of the family school.

Suppose a female teacher, thrown at once, without much experience, among 50, 60, or 80 pupils of all sorts of character, and almost every degree of mental development. She has taken the school, it may be, for five months. She receives, or is to receive, a dollar a week and her board—not more, it is admitted, than half as much as she can earn. Nevertheless, it is as much as the district have been accustomed to give; *it is all they have in the treasury, without resorting to taxes or contribution*; it is as much as she can obtain anywhere in the vicinity. Besides, she has a higher object in view in teaching, than merely to gain a livelihood. She is moved to be useful. She has compassion on the ignorant and the vicious, and sees the bearing which the common schools now have upon their condition, and which good common schools might have. In a word, she is impelled by the love of God and of man, no less than by motives which concern self, to engage in this highly responsible employment.

How shall she accomplish during the short period of five months, the greatest amount of good to the pupils of her charge? She is willing, indeed, to please the parents, and secure their entire approbation; and she is not without a desire to obtain the reputation of being an accomplished teacher. Still the great question is, how can she do the most good?

\*We cannot in justice omit here to make our acknowledgements to John T. Norton, Esq. of Farmington, Hon. S. D. Hubbard, of Middletown, Eli T. Hoyt, Esq. of Danbury, and Hon. T. W. Williams, of New London.

Let her in the outset manifest to her pupils, her deep interest in their welfare, her love for them, and her desire for their improvement and happiness, as well as her ardent love for her profession. This is not to be done by wordy pretensions merely, nor even by external manifestations of affection and fondness; but by showing them that she *values* them. The manifestations of genuine love are more readily and effectually made, and less liable to be mistaken, when they consist in making provision for the comfort, cheerfulness, health, and happiness of the children committed to her charge. She who truly loves her pupils, rejoices with them when they rejoice; and weeps with them, or is disposed to do so, when they weep. She is glad to see them enter the school room in the morning, and is accustomed to show forth her gladness, even if it should not find its way into words. She rejoices to see them comfortably warmed and seated, and happy in their seats and studies. Indeed, all the day long, her sympathies vibrate as it were, with their feelings; she has all the solicitude of a tender parent, and her pupils know it. Such conduct will win their confidence—aye, and their love, too, if any thing will.

"Love, and love only, is the loss for love."

One proof that a teacher loves her pupils, (and which, by the way, will be likely to make them love her) will be found in the disposition to give them employment. Children must have something to do, unless we would make dolts of them. We have seen a few children from three to seven years of age, who had been forced to the habit of sitting like stocks and stones, in the school room from one to two hours at a time. But such submission to a vile tyranny is not common. If we attempt to keep them so unreasonably quiet, or rather so exceedingly stupid, they usually rebel. They are found in some sort of motion or other, and it must be confessed, quite too often playing tricks. But who can blame them for it?—Which of us, adults, would submit to such tyranny over our movements. Let the teacher therefore, make it a first principle to find her pupils pretty full employment.

Children should indeed be taught to sit still a reasonable length of time. It is a kind of discipline which is believed to be as useful as any thing else. Yet there is no reason why a child should be taught to sit still long enough to hear a speech of ten hours from a modern congressional orator. Neither should he be taught to sit still two hours, or even one hour, on a hard bench in a school room. They must have employment; the smallest of them as well as the largest.

By employment, however, I mean a great variety of things, as well as mere school exercises. Very small pupils may be employed even in standing up. A young female teacher who is busily employed, for example, in instructing one of her more advanced classes, perceives half a dozen of her smaller pupils getting uneasy on their seats, and tying or untying their own shoes or those of their neighbors. Will she not better manifest her own love as well as be much more likely to secure theirs, if instead of a reprimand or a frown, she permits them to stand up a few moments. They are usually pleased with it, and it usually succeeds in turning off their attention from what is usually called mischief. Care must be taken of course, not to have them stand too long; for they soon get tired of standing, and then it is no longer a reward but a punishment. Five minutes is usually a long time to the young pupil, and however short it may seem to us, it is frequently as long as will be pleasant to them—sometimes even longer. It may be well, if there is a clock in the room, as there ought to be, to name a time—two, three, four, five, or six minutes, according to circumstances—and let them see by the clock, if they understand it, that you are not governed by caprice in your decision about the expiration of the time; for otherwise you will or may be sometimes suspected of deceiving them, and extending your five minutes to eight or ten.

When a teacher cannot oversee the little pupils, while they stand, another scholar may be delegated to act in her stead, at least for a time. Ingenious teachers, however, soon learn to divide their attention so far as to oversee several such little classes while standing, without any interference with their more serious and arduous duties. For if rightly managed, they will esteem it a great favor to stand, and instead of requiring attention, would seem to be quite conscientious, and diligent in standing upright, and conducting with propriety.

The same general principles may be applied to other movements of young children, in the school room, for a similar pur-

pose; as marching, clapping hands, &c. But it is not sufficient to exercise young children in the school room; they should be permitted to go out into the open air, at least once an hour, especially in summer.\* Here, in particular, the care of a monitor is required, not only to prevent their doing any thing wrong, or standing beyond the appointed time, but also to keep them from receiving injury to body or mind by accident or from contagion of bad example. Let it not be forgotten, moreover, that no discipline could be more useful to a monitor herself, if she is judiciously selected and happily adapted to her class, than the oversight of his companions. The nearer the monitor is to her own age, provided he is old enough to exercise properly the authority delegated to him, the better will it be for both the parties.

There is no great difficulty in employing young pupils in such a way as to keep them out of mischief, would we only try seriously to use our inventive powers. And yet how to manage very small pupils is often one of the most serious troubles which the teachers of our large central schools, especially in the summer, are called to encounter. Many a teacher would tell you that were it not for a part of very small scholars, she could accomplish something, but that the management of the small pupils consumes almost all her time. And there is very little doubt that a teacher will usually find it much easier to instruct forty pupils, who are all over six years of age, than twenty, of whom ten are from three to five.

Now if this difficulty of managing very young pupils—those we mean who are from three to six, can be overcome—if there are methods of managing them with far greater ease and profit—then is it not desirable that such methods should be pointed out?

Some of them have been alluded to in the foregoing paragraphs. But there are others, which remain to be mentioned. One of the more important of these, consists in the use of slates. We speak from experience when we say that one third of the tedium and not a little of what is called mischief may be prevented by the introduction of slates and pencils among little children. Our experience has indeed been confined to slates of a very small size, only four to six inches square, frame and all, with short pieces of pencil. These were given to them as a favor, and only when other expedients began to fail. When the school commenced, they were required to sit awhile, without much notice, which they were usually willing to do. But after half an hour or so, it became necessary to give them occasional opportunities of standing. After the lapse of an hour, recreation became necessary in the open air, and when the weather was good it was allowed; but when the weather was very bad, marching and other indoor exercises were substituted. After exercise, they could sit still again; again their sitting could be alternated with standing; and finally towards the close of each half day, slates were allowed. Those alone who have used slates with such small pupils, can readily conceive of the pleasure which they derive from their use, and of the benefit both to the teacher and the scholars.

Some will suppose that these efforts to employ pupils will cost more time than the usual efforts at correcting evils after they are perpetrated. They are mistaken however. That it takes a little time to form one's plan for employing her pupils, as well as a little more to put it in execution, and accustom the pupils to it, and especially to fit a few monitors for their duty will not be denied. But when once fairly set a going, all proceeds like clock work, and almost as quietly and harmoniously. And when in full operation, the saving of time to the teachers is immense. Besides it is only in the beginning of these novelties that they cause trouble among the pupils by exciting attention. When they once clearly perceive that their teacher is a woman of expedients; that she can at any time invent something new, the novelty ceases in a great measure, to cause interruption. It is indeed noticed at first, but is soon forgotten.

At first, it may be well to allow pupils to follow the bent of their own inclination in regard to the purpose to which they apply their slates, till they get a little accustomed to the use of a pencil; after which it may be well to give them lessons. These may be various. Sometimes a letter of the alphabet

\* In bad weather, a playroom, or, at least, a playground covered with an awning, is exceedingly desirable. No parent would grudge the expense of it, if he had but the most distant conception of its value.

will form a good lesson; sometimes a triangle or square; sometimes the picture of a boy consisting of a mere outline or the picture of a dog or horse.

Little time need be consumed by the teacher in these exercises. Suppose the lesson is the letter O, or A, or H, or W; it is sufficient for the teacher to give out the slates and pencils which are kept in a box or draw, and after making the letter which she wishes them to make, on the side of a large slate, hang it up before them or procure another scholar to hold it. When the first symptoms of fatigue with the exercises begin to appear, a new lesson should be given, or the slates should be taken away. In any event it is by no means advisable to let them retain them till they grow indifferent about them. The greatest care should be taken at all times to avoid satiety.

This method of combining amusement and instruction may be prosecuted to an indefinite extent; at least we have never found any limits to it. We are not sure that it may not be well to require each Abcedarian to write for his slate lesson the letter he is learning. Perhaps a class of this description might begin with the small o or i, and alternately pronounce it and write it until perfectly familiar to them. In any event it would be desirable to have them write all their lessons, when a little more advanced.

Let neither the teacher nor the pupils be discouraged at the rough lines and uncouth resemblances of the first efforts. All things in nature must have a beginning.

From the writing of small letters on the slate, the pupil may proceed, in time, to the larger letters; afterward to combinations of letters, beginning with the simplest and proceeding by degrees to the more difficult.

We have spoken as if the course to be pursued with a pupil, at setting out in the path of knowledge, was to begin with the study of letters. The best teachers, of late, begin with whole words, as *hand*, *book* &c. and when the pupil has become somewhat familiar with the practice of reading whole words and simple combinations of words, or short sentences, he is required to analyze them, or study the letters separately. In case of beginning to read whole words, we would depart a little from the plan above suggested, that of writing the lesson the pupil is studying, for though reading whole words we would still write single letters.

There is one capital exercise however for children which may and should accompany the reading of whole words, as above. The teacher should procure a quantity of the words the pupil is reading and have them in a box ready for use. Thus suppose the current lesson of a child consists of the two words *hand* and *book*. In this case he should have a considerable number of words of those two kinds, cut from a printed book or newspaper in large type together with a few others as man, horse, and cow. After a class have been reading *book* and *hand*, the teacher or monitor, may lay a handful of the words we have mentioned before each pupil, on his desk,\* if he have one, if not, on some book spread open, or on a board or bench, and set him to selecting the two words of his lesson and telling which they are, as well as distinguishing one from the other. In like manner if the letters are learned before words, the same course may be pursued in relation to the letters.

One admirable exercise nearly akin to the foregoing consists in incorporating letters into words. Thus after a child has made some progress in reading whether after the old plan or the new, we give him a quantity of letters cut out as above, and allow him to combine them into words.

There is another exercise beyond this, which may be employed at a very early age. It consists in requiring the pupils to combine written letters into words. To this end however the written letters ought to be very plainly written; copy slips would be preferable to any thing else. At a period still later he might learn to combine words. Another exercise, and a most admirable one for the slate, might be that of making and combining figures. Thus after being taught to make 1, 2, 3, &c. he might be taught how to put together 1 and 2, and 1 and 3, 1 and 4, &c. and might be taught also, their value separately and combined.

As the child advances, and becomes able to write his lesson

in spelling, and to write well and rapidly, he may amuse himself as well as improve his mind in perfecting his lessons still more and more. It may be questioned whether any special exercises in writing, in the usual way, will be necessary to those who are constantly accustomed to the use of slates from the very first. Certain it is that without them such pupils never fail to write a good hand, as we have seen abundantly proved in both common schools, and institutions for the deaf and dumb.

By this method of employing children, more for the sake of employing them than any thing else, we thus initiate them into reading, writing, spelling, &c. But we have not yet done with slate exercises. The farther a child advances, and the more he uses his slate, the more will he love to use it, and the more may it be made an efficient instrument in the way of his improvement.

It would require a volume to set forth in detail all the methods which might be devised of using a slate advantageously in the business and duties of the common school. Not that books are to be wholly overlooked and despised; by no means. But far more may be done by pupils between the ages of three or four, and seven or eight years, with nothing but slates and pencils, than by all the books in the world, without the slates.\*

Books like slates, should be esteemed as favors, and should in no case be imposed as punishments, nor lessons as tasks. And yet as many teachers are apt to manage, there is not a child in a whole school who does not see that his lesson is imposed as a task and the book handed to him to keep him out of mischief, or at least, as an obstacle to prevent his doing mischief with so much ease—a clog upon his heels, so cumbersome that in traversing the by paths of roguery, he must go a little more slowly.

As things are now managed, it would be a matter of the greatest surprise, if little children at school did not find their lessons irksome rather than pleasant, and their books a burden than a source of happiness. But let a hungering and thirsting be created for them in the use of their slates, and then let these be given out to them at a certain time, for a certain time—five, ten, or twelve minutes, and then before they get tired of them or begin to soil them, let them be taken away, and we should soon have far less complaint than we now do about dulness of apprehension and a disrelish for study.

Think of the advantages to be derived to parents, teachers and pupils, from substituting slates for books. In the first place, the expense of the slates and pencils is as nothing compared with that of books. Secondly, they are better pleased with them. Thirdly, they give them more varied employment; a point of exceeding great importance. Fourthly, they prevent the habits of soiling and injuring books, and by consequence of being slovenly with other things, (such, a child who is slovenly in the use of books, will easily be so in the use of every thing else, unless the habit is counteracted.) Fifthly, a great deal of time is saved to the teacher to be devoted to the discipline and instruction of the rest of the school. This alone is worth all the pains which such an innovation upon old usages is likely to cost. And lastly, it prevents the formation of a thousand little habits as those of biting the nails, picking the nose, rubbing the eyes, shrugging the shoulders &c. &c. habits, which beginning as a relief either from ennui or actual pain, gradually become by repetition almost invulnerable.

But there are a few more special uses of the slate in the case of pupils who have become tolerably good readers; and with the pencil, ready writers. We must however be brief in our remarks.

One is writing and drawing. We have already alluded to this subject, as a mere employment and to prevent bad habits. But after our young pupils get the use of the pencil, and begin to imitate forms be it ever so roughly, they may not only be employed but instructed; and that too with some regard to system. They may not only be permitted to make angles, and triangles, squares and circles, but also irregular ones, and they may be taught to distinguish the one from another as well as to combine them in various ways, beginning with the simplest.

\*It is quite convenient for every pupil in school, however small, to have a seat of his own, with a back to it, and a desk in front; and each seat and desk should be independent of, and separate from every other.

<sup>1</sup>Let us not be understood as disposed to turn all study into mere play. Far from it. Children should be taught to study in due time; and to study hard. The great point is to lead them along in such a manner that they will love study. To this end it is that we would make their first studies, though not play, yet playful; that their future ones may be voluntary and agreeable.

Again, in regard to circles. One circle may be made to represent the sun, another the moon; and another the human head, another the eye; another a piece of money, a button, a clock face, a watch, a ring, or a plate. Not that a circular line represents any one of these with exactness, unless it be a ring, but because they are bounded by a circular line, which the young eye readily detects, before it detects much else, because it greatly aids in leading the child to observation. Thus he who draws a circle to represent the moon, or the human head, will be very aptly led to notice the objects connected with the moon and head, and may easily be induced to represent them also.

Here it may be asked whether exercises of this sort will not degenerate into mere play and picture making. They may or they may not. There is no necessity of any such degeneracy. In the first place, the use of the slates should not be continued too long at any one time. In the second place, they should be taken away when they play with them, when they depart, we mean, from the intention of the lesson. This punishment the punishment of privation is the only one which we have ever found necessary in such cases.

When a pupil knows that if he departs very widely from the intention of the lesson, his slate will be taken from him, he will usually confine himself to its legitimate and appropriate use.

One word more however in regard to drawing circles. The pupil may be shown that two circles combined form the figure 8; that one circle forms the letter O small and large; that a circle with a small break in it forms the greater part of the large and small C as well as the large Q and G and the small e; that an important portion of the small letters b, d, p, q, s, as well as the large letters B D and P R S and U are made up from a circle; and finally that the figures 2 3 5 6 9 are essential parts of circles.

The teacher whose common sense approves of the suggestions of these paragraphs and who wishes to prevent the monotony and tediousness, and disgust so common in our schools, must however, remember one caution which is, "to make haste slowly." Let him procure the slates and short pieces of pencil; they cost but little. But let him not proceed too rapidly, and make too many innovations at a time. Perhaps he need not with these hints before him, be like ourselves, ten or twelve years in coming to a rational course of management; nor need we have been so long, had the light been thrown in our path to guide us, which we are now endeavoring to hold out to others.

Proceeding cautiously, however, feeling his way with care, the teacher will bring his pupils at length, to such a degree of perfection in the use of slates and pencils, that much may be done with them in the inculcation and acquisition of almost every elementary branch which devolves on her to teach.

Much may be done at map making, provided the pupils can be furnished with large slates, for the small slates we have mentioned would hardly be adapted to this purpose. The practice of drawing the windows, table, walls and floor, already recommended would prepare the way for it; it is indeed the commencement of it; for what is this very exercise but map making? It might easily be extended to drawing the outline, of the school house, the play ground, the dwelling house to which the child belongs, its various rooms, the garden, the home lot, the streets of the neighborhood; his native town, &c. When a child has proceeded so far as to draw the outlines of a county or state it may be well to alternate another exercise with the last, which consists in teaching him to combine dissected maps, using the other maps with the county and town lines as the case may be, as a guide, till he becomes a little familiar with the exercise.

After the pupils have become a little accustomed to putting words together to form sentences, (printed words we mean, cut from some book or paper) a most excellent preparatory exercise, by the way—words may be given them for this purpose by dictation. Thus the teacher or a monitor may dictate to them slowly the following list of words, requesting them to write them on their slates and then proceed to form them into sentences. *Man, short, evil, and, life, the, is, are, trouble, days, full, no, few.*

How many sentences can be formed, which will have force and meaning to them, from these thirteen short words, we are not sure; but we recollect readily the following eleven.

"Days are short," "The days of man are short," "The days of man are few," "The days of man are few and full of trouble," "Life is short," "Life is full of evil," "Life is full of trouble," "Man is evil," "Man is full of trouble," "Man is evil and full of trouble," "Trouble no man."

If a monitor find it difficult at first to select such words as would form a pleasing variety of sentences, a little instruction from an experienced teacher would remove the difficulty. One way is for the monitor to take short and easy lessons in a reading book, and after noting which of them occur more frequently and seem to be the most useful for his purpose, give them out accordingly.

But we come finally to the most important exercise of all—one in fact for which all the others are a preparation, and which consists in framing a single important and interesting word, given out by the teacher, into one or more sentences. Thus the following words are perhaps given out to be written down on the slate. Apple, gold, tree, paper, dog, lion, hawk, snow, wind, angry, head, arm, hand, foot, house, room.

This is indeed, a long list, much longer than would be at first view either necessary or useful; but it is selected as an illustration of our meaning. Perhaps the first three of these words might be sufficient for a single lesson. Each pupil is required to form one or more sentences into which each of these words enters as a component part, and to use his own judgment in the selection and formation of his sentences.

They only who have pursued this plan of instruction are aware how interesting as well as profitable it is to pupils, and how it calls into exercise all their powers and faculties. One great objection to most of the methods of instruction which now prevail in our common schools is, that they cultivate the mind but partially or unequally. But that the exercise in question has a more happy effect will be easily seen by the following consideration of its results.

Thus one pupil will make the following use of the list of words referred to. Charles gave me an *apple*." "Gold is yellow." Zaccheus climbed a *tree*." Another will write; "The *apple* is useful for food, both for men and beasts." "My father has a *gold* watch." "The *elm* *tree* at the corner of the green is beautiful." A third; especially when he understands that he may, will write some little anecdote of one or more of the words; perhaps of the word *tree*. "One of my *cousins*" he will say, "undertook one day to climb an *apple* tree after a birds' nest, and when he had got nearly up to it a rotten limb on which he had placed his foot gave way, and he fell across the fence and injured his back so much that he was lame and had to stay in the house, and keep his bed many months afterwards. I think he must have been very sorry he attempted to climb after bird's nests."

It may not readily occur to every teacher that in this simple act of incorporating words into sentences, varied as it might be from time to time, we might at once teach the elements of almost every branch of the English education. Not however in the hands of any ordinary monitor; for here the actual personal direction of an ingenious teacher is indispensable.

1. It is an exercise in writing, as has been already repeatedly mentioned, nor are we quite sure that much time need be spent in any other writing lessons than those which the exercises already mentioned, and this above the rest would involve.

2. It is excellent as a method of teaching spelling. For to say nothing of requiring the pupils to spell the words, as a spelling lesson, the very act of writing, and incorporating them into their respective sentences would almost certainly lead to their right orthography. The teacher, in looking over the exercise, would probably mark the words spelled incorrectly. Every scholar, however, in forming his sentences should have free access to a dictionary and be taught to use it. Such a method in fact, is the most truly practical method of teaching spelling with which we have ever been acquainted.

3. It may be made the basis of a reading exercise. One of the great difficulties which teachers have to contend with, is the fitness of the reading lessons contained in our reading books for juvenile apprehension. Children do not, as a general fact, understand what they read. To read well we must understand what we read and be interested in the subject. In requiring a pupil to read sentences, paragraphs and stories, formed by himself both these points would be gained. He would of course understand what he wrote himself, and could he be uninterested in it?

4. Can it be necessary to say that one of the chief excellencies of lessons of this sort is, that they lead the pupil to compose properly ere he is aware of it? The exercise in question is a thousand times better for teaching composition, than by formal lessons for the express purpose.

5. The use of grammar is to accustom us to speak and write correctly and intelligibly. Now if we can learn to write correctly, it will be a great aid to correct speaking. But can there be a doubt that the exercise of which we are speaking, would lead inevitably to correct writing?

6. It might be made to involve much of geography. Suppose one of the words dictated was Gibraltar. Let it be required of the pupil to give a familiar geographical description of the place; for which purpose, he should be required to study it. It should also be required of him to present his thoughts in his own language, and not in the language of the books he studies.

7. What has been said of teaching geography in this way, is equally applicable to biography, history, and chronology, and in some respects to arithmetic. The words Franklin, Mexico, Plymouth, &c. would involve these varied sciences.

8. The words *head* and *hand* might be made a sort of text or starting point, where, or around which, the pupil might be encouraged to cluster what he could learn of anatomy, physiology, and health; in doing which, as well as in the cases just mentioned, familiar oral lessons from the teacher to the class from time to time, would be of immense service and should never be dispensed with.

9. But it can hardly be necessary to particularize further.—To the ingenious teacher it will be obvious, that so far as the elements of a science can be taught, what might with propriety be called the topic system, there is scarcely a single branch, not excepting religion itself, which this exercise may not be made to include. And if rightly conducted, it may always involve and inculcate, in every lesson, writing, spelling, reading, composition, grammar and logic.

Will it be said by any teachers, that by the prominence we thus give to slate exercises and oral instruction, we exclude or seem to exclude, books almost entirely? Very far indeed from it. The exercises in question serve as an introduction to their profitable use, and to enhance their value. When used they will be used carefully as well as highly prized—nor will they be thrown aside the instant the pupil gets astride of the door of the school house. They will recall to his mind in after life, none but pleasant associations of ideas, and will not serve the purpose, whenever they come in sight, of small doses of nauseating medicines.

But the question will still recur—and it is an important one—since it will not, in all probability be expedient to abolish the old fashioned exercises of our schools at once, if ever, how should these exercises be conducted? In what way shall the exercise of reading for example be managed, so as to render it most beneficial to the whole class? Shall each particular pupil, at each exercise be required to read more or less whatever may be the numbers of his class, and however small may be his proportion of the time? Or shall one, or a very small number read, and the others make corrections? Or shall the teacher read, requiring the others to correct her?

There can be no doubt that various methods of teaching reading may, under different circumstances, be adopted. Seldom, however, have we thought it best for a large class, consisting of fifteen or twenty, or even twelve scholars, or when we had but fifteen or twenty minutes to expend, to read through the class, two or three times, as the common custom is. On the contrary, we have often found it better, and sometimes equally pleasant for a few only to read the lesson, the rest observing how it was read, and at the proper time, making their remarks, and offering their corrections. If A, B, C, and D, read the lesson to-day, and the others make their remarks; E, F, G, and H, may be required to read to-morrow, and the readers of to-day become critics in return.

Perhaps, however, there is not, and cannot be a better exercise in reading in common schools, than for the teacher to read before his pupils, and afterward call upon them, severally, for their corrections. They should be required to correct him in every point, as to loudness of voice, distinctness, emphasis, cadence, tone, and correct pronunciation. Let them not only say wherein he seemed to them to fail in any respect, but also wherein an improvement might be made in his manner of

reading. We repeat it, we are quite sure that in no reading exercise, in a very large school, can five, ten, or fifteen minutes, be expended on a large class, to better purpose, than in the one we have just mentioned.

We have a great deal we should like to say in regard to methods of teaching reading, and spelling, as well as many other branches, but we have said enough for the present. The teacher who would not be benefitted by the hints which have already thrown out, on the subject, would hardly profit from further remarks, while to the true inquirer, much has been said that will be calculated to elicit thought, if not—as peradventure may happen, momentary opposition. Nothing, however, do we dread in connection with this subject so much as a death-like stillness. The teacher's duties as well as his principles and practice, should be made the subject of frequent animated discussion, and every reasonable effort should be made to render our common schools, what they should be, and what they might have been.

#### THE WAY TO IMPROVE COMMON SCHOOLS.

In the last number of the Journal, under the head Summer Schools, we gave an extract from a valuable letter, relating more especially to Summer Schools. We have since received two more letters from the same hand. Our correspondent will pardon us for speaking thus complimentary of them; these letters have given us more real satisfaction, and stronger grounds of confidence in the steady and ultimate improvement of our common schools, than any communications which we have received. The writer speaks of himself, "as having become so deeply interested in schools, that any piece of writing headed schools, draws my attention like a magnet. I should like were I able, to traverse the country and visit the best schools, that I might act with more intelligence in my efforts to improve the schools of this society, but I am poor mechanic, a day laborer for —, and am uneducated, or at best, but self-educated in part." When will others like him, who must rely on common schools for the means of educating their children, take hold of this great instrument of their own and their children's usefulness, and elevation, with the same vigor and intelligence. But we will not detain our readers by further remarks of our own. We are sure they will find here practical methods suggested for improving our schools.

"At the annual meeting in August last, there was a district committee of three appointed. The committee warned a meeting, but so few came, that it was thought best to adjourn for a few days, and each one agreed to notify all they met and try to persuade them to come. In this way about twenty parents were collected. All of them I have reason to believe, felt some interest in the schools; but they could not exactly agree what was the best course to pursue. One of the committee proposed to hire three teachers, and have three schools, one for the oldest children, another for the youngest, &c. But one rises up and objects to three schools, because we had three public schools one winter and we had a good deal of difficulty with them. One school was designed for the oldest, but some claimed a right to send their little ones where they pleased, and some did send their small children to the school with the large ones, and every one sent to which they pleased. This caused much disorder and some hard feelings. Men were appointed to assign the children to their proper places, but they neglected to do it because some persons claimed, that all the schools were public schools, and all belonged to one district, and they had a right to send to which they pleased, and would, and did. This one says, "it will be just so again and we cannot help, or prevent it,"—another, "there are two private schools established, and he should think two public schools sufficient." Another, whose whole interest was in the private schools, insinuated the idea that if they had three other schools they would have to hire a room, and it would almost double their tax." It was evident that he wanted but two public schools and those not very good, so that the private schools might be full. We had proof of this afterwards. A motion was finally made to have two schools, three voted in favor of it, and two against it; so it was called a vote. It was astonishing to see such indifference among so many parents, that only five could be induced to vote either for or against two schools. The other business of the meeting was finished quick, and the meeting dissolved. Two of the committee agreed that they would do nothing about employing two teachers or have any thing to do with the schools, for it appeared to them that there was no chance for good schools on the present plan, and poor schools they had enough of. So they went and told the member of the committee who was in favor of two schools only, that he might hire his two teachers, and go on with the business to his liking. They told the same story to every one they met. People began to come to their senses, and the committee was petitioned from all quar-

Let her in the outset manifest to her pupils, her deep interest in their welfare, her love for them, and her desire for their improvement and happiness, as well as her ardent love for her profession. This is not to be done by wordy pretensions merely, nor even by external manifestations of affection and fondness; but by showing them that she *values* them. The manifestations of genuine love are more readily and effectually made, and less liable to be mistaken, when they consist in making provision for the comfort, cheerfulness, health, and happiness of the children committed to her charge. She who truly loves her pupils, rejoices with them when they rejoice; and weeps with them, or is disposed to do so, when they weep. She is glad to see them enter the school room in the morning, and is accustomed to show forth her gladness, even if it should not find its way into words. She rejoices to see them comfortably warmed and seated, and happy in their seats and studies. Indeed, all the day long, her sympathies vibrate as it were, with their feelings; she has all the solicitude of a tender parent, and her pupils know it. Such conduct will win their confidence—aye, and their love, too, if any thing will.

"Love, and love only, is the loan for love."

One proof that a teacher loves her pupils, (and which, by the way, will be likely to make them love her) will be found in the disposition to give them employment. Children must have something to do, unless we would make dolts of them. We have seen a few children from three to seven years of age, who had been forced to the habit of sitting like stocks and stones, in the school room from one to two hours at a time. But such submission to a vile tyranny is not common. If we attempt to keep them so unreasonably quiet, or rather so exceedingly stupid, they usually rebel. They are found in some sort of motion or other, and it must be confessed, quite too often playing tricks. But who can blame them for it?—Which of us, adults, would submit to such tyranny over our movements. Let the teacher therefore, make it a first principle to find her pupils pretty full employment.

Children should indeed be taught to sit still a reasonable length of time. It is a kind of discipline which is believed to be as useful as any thing else. Yet there is no reason why a child should be taught to sit still long enough to hear a speech of ten hours from a modern congressional orator. Neither should he be taught to sit still two hours, or even one hour, on a hard bench in a school room. They must have employment; the smallest of them as well as the largest.

By employment, however, I mean a great variety of things, as well as mere school exercises. Very small pupils may be employed even in standing up. A young female teacher who is busily employed, for example, in instructing one of her more advanced classes, perceives half a dozen of her smaller pupils getting uneasy on their seats, and tying or untying their own shoes or those of their neighbors. Will she not better manifest her own love as well as be much more likely to secure theirs, if instead of a reprimand or a frown, she permits them to stand up a few moments. They are usually pleased with it, and it usually succeeds in turning off their attention from what is usually called mischief. Care must be taken of course, not to have them stand too long; for they soon get tired of standing, and then it is no longer a reward but a punishment. Five minutes is usually a long time to the young pupil, and however short it may seem to us, it is frequently as long as will be pleasant to them—sometimes even longer. It may be well, if there is a clock in the room, as there ought to be, to name a time—two, three, four, five, or six minutes, according to circumstances—and let them see by the clock, if they understand it, that you are not governed by caprice in your decision about the expiration of the time; for otherwise you will or may be sometimes suspected of deceiving them, and extending your five minutes to eight or ten.

When a teacher cannot oversee the little pupils, while they stand, another scholar may be delegated to act in her stead, at least for a time. Ingenious teachers, however, soon learn to divide their attention so far as to oversee several such little classes while standing, without any interference with their more serious and arduous duties. For if rightly managed, they will esteem it a great favor to stand, and instead of requiring attention, would seem to be quite conscientious, and diligent in standing upright, and conducting with propriety.

The same general principles may be applied to other movements of young children, in the school room, for a similar pur-

pose; as marching, clapping hands, &c. But it is not sufficient to exercise young children in the school room; they should be permitted to go out into the open air, at least once an hour, especially in summer.\* Here, in particular, the care of a monitor is required, not only to prevent their doing any thing wrong, or standing beyond the appointed time, but also to keep them from receiving injury to body or mind by accident or from contagion of bad example. Let it not be forgotten, moreover, that no discipline could be more useful to a monitor herself, if she is judiciously selected and happily adapted to her class, than the oversight of his companions. The nearer the monitor is to her own age, provided he is old enough to exercise properly the authority delegated to him, the better will it be for both the parties.

There is no great difficulty in employing young pupils in such a way as to keep them out of mischief, would we only try seriously to use our inventive powers. And yet how to manage very small pupils is often one of the most serious troubles which the teachers of our large central schools, especially in the summer, are called to encounter. Many a teacher would tell you that were it not for a part of very small scholars, she could accomplish something, but that the management of the small pupils consumes almost all her time. And there is very little doubt that a teacher will usually find it much easier to instruct forty pupils, who are all over six years of age, than twenty, of whom ten are from three to five.

Now if this difficulty of managing very young pupils—those we mean who are from three to six, can be overcome—if there are methods of managing them with far greater ease and profit—then is it not desirable that such methods should be pointed out?

Some of them have been alluded to in the foregoing paragraphs. But there are others, which remain to be mentioned. One of the more important of these, consists in the use of slates. We speak from experience when we say that one third of the tedium and not a little of what is called mischief may be prevented by the introduction of slates and pencils among little children. Our experience has indeed been confined to slates of a very small size, only four to six inches square, frame and all, with short pieces of pencil. These were given to them as a favor, and only when other expedients began to fail. When the school commenced, they were required to sit awhile, without much notice, which they were usually willing to do. But after half an hour or so, it became necessary to give them occasional opportunities of standing. After the lapse of an hour, recreation became necessary in the open air, and when the weather was good it was allowed; but when the weather was very bad, marching and other indoor exercises were substituted. After exercise, they could sit still again; again their sitting could be alternated with standing; and finally towards the close of each half day, slates were allowed. Those alone who have used slates with such small pupils, can readily conceive of the pleasure which they derive from their use, and of the benefit both to the teacher and the scholars.

Some will suppose that these efforts to employ pupils will cost more time than the usual efforts at correcting evils after they are perpetrated. They are mistaken however. That it takes a little time to form one's plan for employing her pupils, as well as a little more to put it in execution, and accustom the pupils to it, and especially to fit a few monitors for their duty will not be denied. But when once fairly set a going, all proceeds like clock work, and almost as quietly and harmoniously. And when in full operation, the saving of time to the teachers is immense. Besides it is only in the beginning of these novelties that they cause trouble among the pupils by exciting attention. When they once clearly perceive that their teacher is a woman of expedients; that she can at any time invent something new, the novelty ceases in a great measure, to cause interruption. It is indeed noticed at first, but is soon forgotten.

At first, it may be well to allow pupils to follow the bent of their own inclination in regard to the purpose to which they apply their slates, till they get a little accustomed to the use of a pencil; after which it may be well to give them lessons. These may be various. Sometimes a letter of the alphabet

\* In bad weather, a playroom, or, at least, a playground covered with an awning, is exceedingly desirable. No parent would grudge the expense of it, if he had but the most distant conception of its value.

will form a good lesson; sometimes a triangle or square; sometimes the picture of a boy consisting of a mere outline or the picture of a dog or horse.

Little time need be consumed by the teacher in these exercises. Suppose the lesson is the letter O, or A, or H, or W; it is sufficient for the teacher to give out the slates and pencils which are kept in a box or draw, and after making the letter which she wishes them to make, on the side of a large slate, hang it up before them or procure another scholar to hold it. When the first symptoms of fatigue with the exercises begin to appear, a new lesson should be given, or the slates should be taken away. In any event it is by no means advisable to let them retain them till they grow indifferent about them. The greatest care should be taken at all times to avoid satiety.

This method of combining amusement and instruction may be prosecuted to an indefinite extent; at least we have never found any limits to it. We are not sure that it may not be well to require each Abcedarian to write for his slate lesson the letter he is learning. Perhaps a class of this description might begin with the small o or i, and alternately pronounce it and write it until perfectly familiar to them. In any event it would be desirable to have them write all their lessons, when a little more advanced.

Let neither the teacher nor the pupils be discouraged at the rough lines and uncouth resemblances of the first efforts. All things in nature must have a beginning.

From the writing of small letters on the slate, the pupil may proceed, in time, to the larger letters; afterward to combinations of letters, beginning with the simplest and proceeding by degrees to the more difficult.

We have spoken as if the course to be pursued with a pupil, at setting out in the path of knowledge, was to begin with the study of letters. The best teachers, of late, begin with whole words, as *hand*, *book* &c. and when the pupil has become somewhat familiar with the practice of reading whole words and simple combinations of words, or short sentences, he is required to analyze them, or study the letters separately. In case of beginning to read whole words, we would depart a little from the plan above suggested, that of writing the lesson the pupil is studying, for though reading whole words we would still write single letters.

There is one capital exercise however for children which may and should accompany the reading of whole words, as above. The teacher should procure a quantity of the words the pupil is reading and have them in a box ready for use. Thus suppose the current lesson of a child consists of the two words *hand* and *book*. In this case he should have a considerable number of words of those two kinds, cut from a printed book or newspaper in large type together with a few others as *man*, *horse*, and *cow*. After a class have been reading *book* and *hand*, the teacher or monitor, may lay a handful of the words we have mentioned before each pupil, on his desk,\* if he have one, if not, on some book spread open, or on a board or bench, and set him to selecting the two words of his lesson and telling which they are, as well as distinguishing one from the other. In like manner if the letters are learned before words, the same course may be pursued in relation to the letters.

One admirable exercise nearly akin to the foregoing consists in incorporating letters into words. Thus after a child has made some progress in reading whether after the old plan or the new, we give him a quantity of letters cut out as above, and allow him to combine them into words.

There is another exercise beyond this, which may be employed at a very early age. It consists in requiring the pupils to combine written letters into words. To this end however the written letters ought to be very plainly written; copy slips would be preferable to any thing else. At a period still later he might learn to combine words. Another exercise, and a most admirable one for the slate, might be that of making and combining figures. Thus after being taught to make 1, 2, 3, &c. he might be taught how to put together 1 and 2, and 1 and 3, 1 and 4, &c. and might be taught also, their value separately and combined.

As the child advances, and becomes able to write his lesson

in spelling, and to write well and rapidly, he may amuse himself as well as improve his mind in perfecting his lessons still more and more. It may be questioned whether any special exercises in writing, in the usual way, will be necessary to those who are constantly accustomed to the use of slates from the very first. Certain it is that without them such pupils never fail to write a good hand, as we have seen abundantly proved in both common schools, and institutions for the deaf and dumb.

By this method of employing children, more for the sake of employing them than any thing else, we thus initiate them into reading, writing, spelling, &c. But we have not yet done with slate exercises. The farther a child advances, and the more he uses his slate, the more will he love to use it, and the more may it be made an efficient instrument in the way of his improvement.

It would require a volume to set forth in detail all the methods which might be devised of using a slate advantageously in the business and duties of the common school. Not that books are to be wholly overlooked and despised; by no means. But far more may be done by pupils between the ages of three or four, and seven or eight years, with nothing but slates and pencils, than by all the books in the world, without the slates.\*

Books like slates, should be esteemed as favors, and should in no case be imposed as punishments, nor lessons as tasks. And yet as many teachers are apt to manage, there is not a child in a whole school who does not see that his lesson is imposed as a task and the book handed to him to keep him out of mischief, or at least, as an obstacle to prevent his doing mischief with somuch ease—a clog upon his heels, so cumbersome that in traversing the by paths of roguery, he must go a little more slowly.

As things are now managed, it would be a matter of the greatest surprise, if little children at school did not find their lessons irksome rather than pleasant, and their books a burden than a source of happiness. But let a hungering and thirsting be created for them in the use of their slates, and then let these be given out to them at a certain time, for a certain time—five, ten, or twelve minutes, and then before they get tired of them or begin to soil them, let them be taken away, and we should soon have far less complaint than we now do about dulness of apprehension and a disrelish for study.

Think of the advantages to be derived to parents, teachers and pupils, from substituting slates for books. In the first place, the expense of the slates and pencils is as nothing compared with that of books. Secondly, they are better pleased with them. Thirdly, they give them more varied employment; a point of exceeding great importance. Fourthly, they prevent the habits of soiling and injuring books, and by consequence of being slovenly with other things, (such a child who is slow only in the use of books, will easily be so in the use of every thing else, unless the habit is counteracted.) Fifthly, a great deal of time is saved to the teacher to be devoted to the discipline and instruction of the rest of the school. This alone is worth all the pains which such an innovation upon old usages is likely to cost. And lastly, it prevents the formation of a thousand little habits as those of biting the nails, picking the nose, rubbing the eyes, shrugging the shoulders &c. &c. habits, which beginning as a relief either from ennui or actual pain, gradually become by repetition almost invulnerable.

But there are a few more special uses of the slate in the case of pupils who have become tolerably good readers; and with the pencil, ready writers. We must however be brief in our remarks.

One is writing and drawing. We have already alluded to this subject, as a mere employment and to prevent bad habits. But after our young pupils get the use of the pencil, and begin to imitate forms be it ever so roughly, they may not only be employed but instructed; and that too with some regard to system. They may not only be permitted to make angles, and triangles, squares and circles, but also irregular ones, and they may be taught to distinguish the one from another as well as to combine them in various ways, beginning with the simplest.

\*Let us not be understood as disposed to turn all study into mere play. Far from it. Children should be taught to study in due time; and to study hard. The great point is to lead them along in such a manner that they will love study. To this end it is that we would make their first studies, though not play, yet playful; that their future ones may be voluntary and agreeable.

\*It is quite convenient for every pupil in school, however small, to have a seat of his own, with a back to it, and a desk in front; and each seat and desk should be independent of, and separate from every other.

Again, in regard to circles. One circle may be made to represent the sun, another the moon; and another the human head, another the eye; another a piece of money, a button, a clock face, a watch, a ring, or a plate. Not that a circular line represents any one of these with exactness, unless it be a ring, but because they are bounded by a circular line, which the young eye readily detects, before it detects much else, because it greatly aids in leading the child to observation. Thus he who draws a circle to represent the moon, or the human head, will be very aptly led to notice the objects connected with the moon and head, and may easily be induced to represent them also.

Here it may be asked whether exercises of this sort will not degenerate into mere play and picture making. They may or they may not. There is no necessity of any such degeneracy. In the first place, the use of the slates should not be continued too long at any one time. In the second place, they should be taken away when they play with them, when they depart, we mean, from the intention of the lesson. This punishment the punishment of privation is the only one which we have ever found necessary in such cases.

When a pupil knows that if he departs very widely from the intention of the lesson, his slate will be taken from him, he will usually confine himself to its legitimate and appropriate use.

One word more however in regard to drawing circles. The pupil may be shown that two circles combined form the figure 8; that one circle forms the letter O small and large; that a circle with a small break in it forms the greater part of the large and small C as well as the large Q and G and the small e; that an important portion of the small letters b, d, p, q, s, as well as the large letters B D and P R S and U are made up from a circle; and finally that the figures 2 3 5 6 9 are essential parts of circles.

The teacher whose common sense approves of the suggestions of these paragraphs and who wishes to prevent the monotony and tediousness, and disgust so common in our schools, must however, remember one caution which is, "to make haste slowly." Let him procure the slates and short pieces of pencil; they cost but little. But let him not proceed too rapidly, and make too many innovations at a time. Perhaps he need not with these hints before him, be like ourselves, ten or twelve years in coming to a rational course of management; nor need we have been so long, had the light been thrown in our path to guide us, which we are now endeavoring to hold out to others.

Proceeding cautiously, however, feeling his way with care, the teacher will bring his pupils at length, to such a degree of perfection in the use of slates and pencils, that much may be done with them in the inculcation and acquisition of almost every elementary branch which devolves on her to teach.

Much may be done at map making, provided the pupils can be furnished with large slates, for the small slates we have mentioned would hardly be adapted to this purpose. The practice of drawing the windows, table, walls and floor, already recommended would prepare the way for it; it is indeed the commencement of it; for what is this very exercise but map making? It might easily be extended to drawing the outline, of the school house, the play ground, the dwelling house to which the child belongs, its various rooms, the garden, the home lot, the streets of the neighborhood; his native town, &c. When a child has proceeded so far as to draw the outlines of a county or state it may be well to alternate another exercise with the last, which consists in teaching him to combine dissected maps, using the other maps with the county and town lines as the case may be, as a guide, till he becomes a little familiar with the exercise.

After the pupils have become a little accustomed to putting words together to form sentences, (printed words we mean, cut from some book or paper) a most excellent preparatory exercise, by the way—words may be given them for this purpose by dictation. Thus the teacher or a monitor may dictate to them slowly the following list of words, requesting them to write them on their slates and then proceed to form them into sentences. *Man, short, evil, and, life, the, is, are, trouble, days, full, no, few.*

How many sentences can be formed, which will have force and meaning to them, from these thirteen short words, we are not sure; but we recollect readily the following eleven.

"Days are short," "The days of man are short," "The days of man are few," "The days of man are few and full of trouble," "Life is short," "Life is full of evil," "Life is full of trouble," "Man is evil," "Man is full of trouble," "Man is evil and full of trouble," "Trouble no man."

If a monitor find it difficult at first to select such words as would form a pleasing variety of sentences, a little instruction from an experienced teacher would remove the difficulty. One way is for the monitor to take short and easy lessons in a reading book, and after noting which of them occur more frequently and seem to be the most useful for his purpose, give them out accordingly.

But we come finally to the most important exercise of all—one in fact for which all the others are a preparation, and which consists in framing a single important and interesting word, given out by the teacher, into one or more sentences. Thus the following words are perhaps given out to be written down on the slate. Apple, gold, tree, paper, dog, lion, hawk, snow, wind, angry, head, arm, hand, foot, house, room.

This is indeed, a long list, much longer than would be at first view either necessary or useful; but it is selected as an illustration of our meaning. Perhaps the first three of these words might be sufficient for a single lesson. Each pupil is required to form one or more sentences into which each of these words enters as a component part, and to use his own judgment in the selection and formation of his sentences.

They only who have pursued this plan of instruction are aware how interesting as well as profitable it is to pupils, and how it calls into exercise all their powers and faculties. One great objection to most of the methods of instruction which now prevail in our common schools is, that they cultivate the mind but partially or unequally. But that the exercise in question has a more happy effect will be easily seen by the following consideration of its results.

Thus one pupil will make the following use of the list of words referred to. Charles gave me an *apple*. "Gold is yellow." Zæcæus climbed a *tree*. Another will write; "The apple is useful for food, both for men and beasts." "My father has a *gold* watch." "The elm *tree* at the corner of the green is beautiful." A third; especially when he understands that he may, will write some little anecdote of one or more of the words; perhaps of the word *tree*. "One of my cousins" he will say, "undertook one day to climb an apple tree after a bird's nest, and when he had got nearly up to it a rotten limb on which he had placed his foot gave way, and he fell across the fence and injured his back so much that he was lame and had to stay in the house, and keep his bed many months afterwards. I think he must have been very sorry he attempted to climb after bird's nests."

It may not readily occur to every teacher that in this simple act of incorporating words into sentences, varied as it might be from time to time, we might at once teach the elements of almost every branch of the English education. Not however in the hands of any ordinary monitor; for here the actual personal direction of an ingenious teacher is indispensable.

1. It is an exercise in writing, as has been already repeatedly mentioned, nor are we quite sure that much time need be spent in any other writing lessons than those which the exercises already mentioned, and this above the rest would involve.

2. It is excellent as a method of teaching spelling. For to say nothing of requiring the pupils to spell the words, as a spelling lesson, the very act of writing, and incorporating them into their respective sentences would almost certainly lead to their right orthography. The teacher, in looking over the exercise, would probably mark the words spelled incorrectly. Every scholar, however, in forming his sentences should have free access to a dictionary and be taught to use it. Such a method in fact, is the most truly practical method of teaching spelling with which we have ever been acquainted.

3. It may be made the basis of a reading exercise. One of the great difficulties which teachers have to contend with, is the fitness of the reading lessons contained in our reading books for juvenile apprehension. Children do not, as a general fact, understand what they read. To read well we must understand what we read and be interested in the subject. In requiring a pupil to read sentences, paragraphs and stories, formed by himself both these points would be gained. He would of course understand what he wrote himself, and could he be uninterested in it?

4. Can it be necessary to say that one of the chief excellencies of lessons of this sort is, that they lead the pupil to compose properly ere he is aware of it? The exercise in question is a thousand times better for teaching composition, than by formal lessons for the express purpose.

5. The use of grammar is to accustom us to speak and write correctly and intelligibly. Now if we can learn to write correctly, it will be a great aid to correct speaking. But can there be a doubt that the exercise of which we are speaking, would lead inevitably to correct writing?

6. It might be made to involve much of geography. Suppose one of the words dictated was Gibraltar. Let it be required of the pupil to give a familiar geographical description of the place; for which purpose, he should be required to study it. It should also be required of him to present his thoughts in his own language, and not in the language of the books he studies.

7. What has been said of teaching geography in this way, is equally applicable to biography, history, and chronology, and in some respects to arithmetic. The words Franklin, Mexico, Plymouth, &c. would involve these varied sciences.

8. The words *head* and *hand* might be made a sort of text or starting point, where, or around which, the pupil might be encouraged to cluster what he could learn of anatomy, physiology, and health; in doing which, as well as in the cases just mentioned, familiar oral lessons from the teacher to the class from time to time, would be of immense service and should never be dispensed with.

9. But it can hardly be necessary to particularize further.—To the ingenious teacher it will be obvious, that so far as the elements of a science can be taught, what might with propriety be called the topic system, there is scarcely a single branch, not excepting religion itself, which this exercise may not be made to include. And if rightly conducted, it may always involve and inculcate, in every lesson, writing, spelling, reading, composition, grammar and logic.

Will it be said by any teachers, that by the prominence we thus give to slate exercises and oral instruction, we exclude or seem to exclude, books almost entirely? Very far indeed from it. The exercises in question serve as an introduction to their profitable use, and to enhance their value. When used they will be used carefully as well as highly prized—nor will they be thrown aside the instant the pupil gets astride of the door of the school house. They will recall to his mind in after life, none but pleasant associations of ideas, and will not serve the purpose, whenever they come in sight, of small doses of nauseating medicines.

But the question will still recur—and it is an important one—since it will not, in all probability be expedient to abolish the old fashioned exercises of our schools at once, if ever, how should these exercises be conducted? In what way shall the exercise of reading for example be managed, so as to render it most beneficial to the whole class? Shall each particular pupil, at each exercise be required to read more or less whatever may be the numbers of his class, and however small may be his proportion of the time? Or shall one, or a very small number read, and the others make corrections? Or shall the teacher read, requiring the others to correct her?

There can be no doubt that various methods of teaching reading may, under different circumstances, be adopted. Seldom, however, have we thought it best for a large class, consisting of fifteen or twenty, or even twelve scholars, or when we had but fifteen or twenty minutes to expend, to read through the class, two or three times, as the common custom is. On the contrary, we have often found it better, and sometimes equally pleasant for a few only to read the lesson, the rest observing how it was read, and at the proper time, making their remarks, and offering their corrections. If A, B, C, and D, read the lesson to-day, and the others make their remarks; E, F, G, and H, may be required to read to-morrow, and the readers of to-day become critics in return.

Perhaps, however, there is not, and cannot be a better exercise in reading in common schools, than for the teacher to read before his pupils, and afterward call upon them, severally, for their corrections. They should be required to correct him in every point, as to loudness of voice, distinctness, emphasis, cadence, tone, and correct pronunciation. Let them not only say wherein he seemed to them to fail in any respect, but also wherein an improvement might be made in his manner of

reading. We repeat it, we are quite sure that in no reading exercise, in a very large school, can five, ten, or fifteen minutes, be expended on a large class, to better purpose, than in the one we have just mentioned.

We have a great deal we should like to say in regard to methods of teaching reading, and spelling, as well as many other branches, but we have said enough for the present. The teacher who would not be benefitted by the hints which have already thrown out, on the subject, would hardly profit from further remarks, while to the true inquirer, much has been said that will be calculated to elicit thought, if not—as peradventure may happen, momentary opposition. Nothing, however, do we dread in connection with this subject so much as a death-like stillness. The teacher's duties as well as his principles and practice, should be made the subject of frequent animated discussion, and every reasonable effort should be made to render our common schools, what they should be, and what they might have been.

A.

#### THE WAY TO IMPROVE COMMON SCHOOLS.

In the last number of the Journal, under the head Summer Schools, we gave an extract from a valuable letter, relating more especially to Summer Schools. We have since received two more letters from the same hand. Our correspondent will pardon us for speaking thus complimentary of them; these letters have given us more real satisfaction, and stronger grounds of confidence in the steady and ultimate improvement of our common schools, than any communications which we have received. The writer speaks of himself, "as having become so deeply interested in schools, that any piece of writing headed schools, draws my attention like a magnet. I should like were I able, to traverse the country and visit the best schools, that I might act with more intelligence in my efforts to improve the schools of this society, but I am poor mechanic, a day laborer for —, and am uneducated, or at best, but self-educated in part." When will others like him, who must rely on common schools for the means of educating their children, take hold of this great instrument of their own and their children's usefulness, and elevation, with the same vigor and intelligence. But we will not detain our readers by further remarks of our own. We are sure they will find here practical methods suggested for improving our schools.

"At the annual meeting in August last, there was a district committee of three appointed. The committee warned a meeting, but so few came, that it was thought best to adjourn for a few days, and each one agreed to notify all they met and try to persuade them to come. In this way about twenty parents were collected. All of them I have reason to believe, felt some interest in the schools; but they could not exactly agree what was the best course to pursue. One of the committee proposed to hire three teachers, and have three schools, one for the oldest children, another for the youngest, &c. But one rises up and objects to three schools, because we had three public schools one winter and we had a good deal of difficulty with them. One school was designed for the oldest, but some claimed a right to send their little ones where they pleased, and some did send their small children to the school with the large ones, and every one sent to which they pleased. This caused much disorder and some hard feelings. Men were appointed to assign the children to their proper places, but they neglected to do it because some persons claimed, that all the schools were public schools, and all belonged to one district, and they had a right to send to which they pleased, and would, and did. This one says, "it will be just so again and we cannot help, or prevent it"—another, "there are two private schools established, and he should think two public schools sufficient." Another, whose whole interest was in the private schools, insinuated the idea that if they had three other schools they would have to hire a room, and it would almost double their tax." It was evident that he wanted but two public schools and those not very good, so that the private schools might be full. We had proof of this afterwards. A motion was finally made to have two schools, three voted in favor of it, and two against it; so it was called a vote. It was astonishing to see such indifference among so many parents, that only five could be induced to vote either for or against two schools. The other business of the meeting was finished quick, and the meeting dissolved. Two of the committee agreed that they would do nothing about employing two teachers or have any thing to do with the schools, for it appeared to them that there was no chance for good schools on the present plan, and poor schools they had enough of. So they went and told the member of the committee who was in favor of two schools only, that he might hire his two teachers, and go on with the business to his liking. They told the same story to every one they met. People began to come to their senses, and the committee was petitioned from all quar-

ters to call another meeting. All agreed to vote next time, for or against every motion that should be brought before the meeting. Another meeting was called and well attended. A motion was made to hire three teachers, and that the children should be classified by men to be appointed for that purpose, and the motion was carried without a dissenting voice. The district committee were appointed to make this classification. The schools were started and carried on as the school returns will most likely show, according to the above plan, and better schools we have not had here for five years, which is as far back as I know any thing about them. Last summer we were obliged to drive our children to school, and they would use all the ingenuity they were masters of, to make excuses to stay out of school. The past winter, our only trouble was to keep them from school when we think it not best for them to go. They would go through snow up to their necks, if we would let them, and they would beg and plead for permission to go when they were unwell, saying they should be just as well at school as at home. Other persons tell the same story. Last summer it was almost impossible to make our children read anything at home. Their minds seemed to be wholly on play and mischief. The past winter they voluntarily spend almost the whole of their leisure hours in reading or studying their lessons. They are much more orderly and obedient at home, the natural fruits of order in school. Although much is due to the teachers, for the improvement of the schools this winter, yet I think much more is due to the systematic order and regulations adopted and carried out. One great cause of the low state of common schools in this place, is, that a few unprincipled or misguided men have been suffered to have their own way, and rather than have any difficulty with them they have actually been permitted to rule the school to the great injury of their own, as well as the children of others. And this is one great cause why so many have left the public schools and sent to the private schools. Some respectable persons who had sent to the private schools, had become convinced that private schools were injurious to the public schools, and determined to return to the public schools and lend their aid and influence to support and improve them.

But how astonishing easy it was for the few before alluded to, to frighten them away, and after the close of the first meeting above mentioned they began to talk about setting up another private school. But I determined to have nothing to do with any private school in this place, and if I could not have a good public school here, I would board my children out, where I could. But before much was said or done, another meeting was called. I went with a fixed determination to face all opposition to the improvement of the schools. I never had been in the habit of speaking in any public meeting, but I went to sit and hear what others had to say, and vote as I thought best. But I could sit still among so much apathy no longer. I went determined to make one effort in my life for the public good, and I hope I was in a measure instrumental in the improvement of the schools this winter; but I have done nothing to boast of, nor am I deserving any praise for what I have done. Although there is a decided improvement in our schools this winter, yet they are far inferior to what they should be, and I think they will ever remain so until we have suitable rooms for the children to meet in and other necessary apparatus. An effort has been made to build, but there was so much opposition, that the matter has been postponed for the present. The mass of the people here need more correct information on the subject of schools, we need just such a person as yourself to give a lecture, to the men, women, and children in this place. I did hope, before this you would have favored us with your presence. I think the women if correctly informed would do much to improve the schools by their influence."

"A meeting was called to consider the propriety of building a house sufficiently large to accommodate all the children of the society. We have had four or five crowded meetings, but too many come for no other purpose than to vote down a tax. A few influential persons opposed the plan, and in fact every other plan to improve the schools with a zeal worthy of a better cause. The only reason they gave, was, that they had nothing to do with the public schools, and they never mean to have, and they never will be taxed if they can help it, to build a school house. They spread misinformation as to the plan, and also misrepresented the motives and intentions of those who wish to improve the schools, and in the meetings they made use of every means in their power to prevent, as much as possible, any thing being said in favor of a gradation of schools or any other plan of improvement. The result was the friends of improvement got tired of so much opposition, and thought best to let the matter rest for the present. But it has set people to thinking and speaking on the subject, and I hope they will act more correctly in future. Some parents are beginning to see who are in reality their children's best friends, and that the schools which have been treated and spoken of with ridicule and contempt, are composed of children, of their children, whose station in life will depend mainly on the education they may get there. \* \* \*

A few persons here seem anxious to have a good school for their own children, and the children of the few, but are determined not to help the poor man's child to the same privilege. They are very willing and liberal to provide for and maintain a private school, and thus have one school for the rich and respectable, and another, the common school, for the poor. Another class of men more numerous than the above have

given their support to private schools from the purest motives. They were willing to take their children from the public schools, and leave their share of the public money for the benefit of the children of the poor, and the indifferent. But this class took from these schools what they most needed, their influence. Their interest and their heart went with their children to the private schools. A third class have followed the two first named, and given their support to the private schools for the sake of obtaining a better school for their children than the public, without wishing either to help or injure those who remain in the public schools; but without wishing it, they help to sink them still lower. Another class of persons here have done much to increase the private schools, although they send, and ever intend to send to the public schools. This class are ever ready to reduce the number of public schools, to employ cheap teachers without regard to qualifications, and oppose all rules and regulations in regard to the classification of children of different ages, and attainments. The object of a few is as it appears, to have their own way, but the object of the greater part is, to have as cheap a school as possible, and are therefore willing to favor such measures as will drive a large portion from the public schools, that they may receive a larger share of the benefits of the public money. But they are much mistaken, for in this way the schools are reduced to a worthless state of imperfection, so that their children receive little, if any, benefit from the public money—is wasted or more than wasted on such schools. The first class above mentioned, have been the leaders of the opposition to building a school house and of every other permanent improvement of the public schools, and the last mentioned class, the followers. Added to the above are some persons who have no children to send to any school, and are therefore opposed to being taxed to help build a school house for the benefit of other people's children. But there are people here who have no children, or such as are beyond the school age, who consider public schools public blessings, who are now found among the warmest advocates for improving the public schools. Our school meeting last week was well attended, we had men of wealth and influence with us, they agreed to put their children with the poor man's, and was willing to lend their aid to improve the public schools. Nearly all present appeared to be willing to do all they could under present circumstances to establish and maintain good schools this season. We agreed to employ two female teachers and one man. One female is to teach all the smallest children, the other the older girls. If we have success in obtaining good teachers, we are in a fair way to have better schools than we ever had here in the summer. One private school is started and they are striving hard to obtain scholars enough to support that.

I have now stated all the facts and even more than I at first intended. I have written to you as I should to a confidential friend, although we are perfect strangers to each other. \* \* \* I feel a deep interest in the cause of common school education, I also feel my inability to do much to advance that cause. I am sensible I can do but little, but I hope to be ever ready the remainder of my life, to do what I can and not be a blank in society and a stumbling block in the way of others. I think it quite likely I shall remove from this village within one year to parts to myself as yet unknown; but I wish to leave this place with a good school house, and good schools, and desire to contribute my mite to accomplish that, and I intend to visit some of the best improved school houses, to see the plan, architecture &c. and to learn the best methods of instruction, that I may be able to state unvarnished facts if nothing more."

#### COMMON SCHOOLS ARE MEANS, NOT ENDS.

"Common schools derive their value from the fact, that they are an instrument more extensively applicable to the whole mass of the children, than any other instrument ever yet devised. They are an instrument by which the good men in society can send redeeming influences to those children who suffer under the calamity of vicious parentage, and evil domestic associations. The world is full of lamentable proofs, that the institution of the family, may exist for an indefinite number of generations, without mitigating the horrors of barbarism. But the institution of common schools is the offspring of an advanced state of civilization, and is incapable of co-existing with barbarian life, because, should barbarism prevail, it would destroy the schools, should the schools prevail, it would destroy barbarism. They are the only civil institution capable of extending its beneficent arms to embrace and to cultivate all parts of its nature, every child that comes into the world. Nor can it be forgotten, that there is no other instrumentality which has done or can do so much to inspire that universal reverence for knowledge which incites to its acquisition. Still, these schools are means and not ends. They confer instruments for the acquisition of an object, but they are not the object itself."

#### DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

If one of a caravan, in crossing the Arabian desert, should accidentally descry a fountain at a distance, in the broad waste, and stealing to it, unperceived by the rest of the company,

should slake his own thirst with its sweet waters, and then leave the stream to flow uselessly away, and to be absorbed and lost in the barren sands, without calling upon his companions to come and cool their parched lips with a delicious draught—with what sufficiently opprobrious epithet would men stigmatize the inhumanity of the deed! Let him, who, from the accident of birth or of circumstance, has tasted the satisfactions and the delights, and has experienced the utility, of knowledge, but does nothing to confer upon his fellow beings the blessings which he has enjoyed, answer the question.—Such a man drinks daily at the fountain of knowledge, in the desert of life, and then suffers its copious waters to flow wastefully away, without calling upon his fellow travellers in the journey, to drink of a stream that is abundant for all.

It is said that we are an educated people; and there is a sense, in which this declaration is true. Such an assertion, however, supposes a comparison; and of course, its correctness depends upon the condition of those with whom the comparison is made. Compared with many, and even with most people on the earth, the result would be in our favor; but compared with what we may be and should be, our present inferiority is unspeakable. Take the rank and file of men, without any culling or selection, as you find them in society; take the whole population of husbands and fathers, that belong to a neighbourhood or village; listen to their conversation, when some local occasion has brought them together, and you cannot but perceive, that however much they may know, they might have known indefinitely more; however well they may converse, they might have been able to express themselves indefinitely better, if greater means of knowledge had been possessed and improved. How few men show, that their time and faculties have been employed upon the worthiest objects, on those objects, which would have been most coveted too, had their value been known.

Let a man listen to a party of young people, in the unspent vigor of their days, overflowing with hilarity and joyousness from an inborn spring, and see how much of their mental strength and alertness is squandered upon frivolous or insignificant, perhaps mischievous topics, and he cannot repress a sigh, that powers so noble should be lavished on pursuits so worthless. We would not invest youth with the gravity of age; for who would exchange the bloom of Spring for the yellowing leaf of Autumn? But amongst the allurements which surround youth, some at least, should solicit them into the paths of usefulness and virtue. Temptations to dissipation or to frivolity, should not be left to act alone, and without some antagonist inducements. Let us, at least, make the way which leads to right, as open and accessible, as that which leads to wrong. Children are governed by circumstances, as well as by innate tendencies. If we cannot prescribe the natural tendencies of children, we can prescribe, to a great extent, the circumstances in which they are placed. The first may belong to the jurisdiction of Nature; the last is within our own. If we see, where we ourselves, or our fathers, have been neglectful, let us profit by the discovery; for that lamentation is useless, which does not prompt us to seek and apply a remedy.

The title at the head of this article has suggested these reflections. The benefit of libraries, in common schools, is a modern discovery. But it is one, which is destined to increase, almost indefinitely, the efficiency of those schools. It is an essential step in carrying out the noble plan of public instruction. The state of New York has the honor of first adopting it. In the year 1838, that great state set apart, from its school fund, the sum of \$165,000, to be specially appropriated to the purchase of district school libraries. In 1839, it repeated the enactment, by setting apart another equal sum, for the same object; so that the appropriation by the state now amounts, for this single purpose, to the sum of \$330,000. This amount is to be distributed to the several towns and districts, on condition of their raising an equal sum, to be united with the former, and expended for the same purpose. The common fund rises to the sum of \$660,000. This treasure is to be converted into books—the aliment of intellect and morals; for good books are to the young mind, what the warming sun and the refreshing rain of spring are to the seeds, which have laid dormant in the frosts of winter. They are no more; for they may save from that which is worse than death, as well as bless with that which is better than life. How poor was the gift of Midas, fabled to possess the power of turning whatever

he touched into gold, compared with the power of turning gold into knowledge, and wisdom, and virtue! How glorious is the prerogative of the legislator, when he faithfully uses his privileges for the benefit of his race! Though he fill but a brief hour of political existence, yet in that hour, he can speak a word, which shall enhance the happiness of posterity, at the distance of a thousand years. This is the only worthy immortality upon earth; —not to leave a name, to be upon the lips of men, but to do acts, which shall improve the condition of men, through the flowing ages.

The first legislative action of Massachusetts, on the subject of district school libraries, was in 1837. By an act of April 12th, of that year, the districts were authorized to raise, by tax, a sum not exceeding \$30 for the first year, and \$10 for any succeeding year, to be expended in the purchase of a school library and apparatus, for the use of the children in the schools. Although almost three years have elapsed, yet very few districts have established a library under this law. Only about fifty common school libraries exist in the three thousand districts in the state; and but few of these have been obtained under the act of 1837. In most cases, the districts have been indebted to private subscription or individual generosity.

*Mass. Com. School Jour.*

#### MAN'S HAPPINESS AND USEFULNESS DEPENDS

##### ON EDUCATION.

The capacity of improvement, is the faculty, which more than any other, distinguishes man from the lower animals. He comes into the world as ignorant, as destitute of moral sense and quite as helpless to say the least, as any of them. They pass through their monotonous existence, slaves to the same fixed instincts, blindly obeying, from generation to generation, the same impulses which were implanted in the original constitution of their race. The dog that accompanied Newton in his study, was not more knowing or more faithful than the dog that died for joy at the return home of Ulysses. Succeeding centuries do not change a note in the song of the nightingale, nor vary one angle in the architecture of the honey-comb. The primitive type of each species is exactly copied and perpetually reproduced in the whole progeny, except only some slight modifications produced by domestication, or other novel circumstances in their situation, perfectly involuntary on their part, and operating unconsciously to them.

Far otherwise is it with man. His instincts are less clear, his senses less acute, his strength, and swiftness, and vigor, less extraordinary than those of several of the quadrupeds. Necessity drives him to observe the qualities of things, and to take advantage of such as he can make serviceable to his purposes. Nature seems, at first sight, to have treated him like a step-son. She sets him down upon the barren waste, naked and houseless, yet needing clothing and shelter; without swiftness to overtake the herds that wander over the pastures, or force, to conquer, or weapons, to defend himself against, the fierce monsters that prey upon them; in short, destitute, helpless. Knowledge gives him clothing, shelter, food, and tools. With tools he constructs machines; with machines, he manufactures comforts and luxuries; and with these he accumulates wealth, for his own future enjoyment, and to bequeath to his children after him. He establishes governments, to protect his liberty and life and wealth; under whose wing he prosecutes his researches and improvements, till he considers him ignorant, whom earlier ages would have called wise, and him poor, whom the first stages of society would have styled rich.

The development of the moral character marks out even a more astonishing contrast, than the cultivation of the intellect. From the cannibals of New Zealand, to Howard the Philanthropist, the distance seems vast enough for many distinct intermediate orders of being. Scarce any two animals can be named, more completely unlike in their desires, propensities, and habits.

All that goes to form the man, to develop or to modify his original character, to work any change whatever in the natural, innate disposition and force of his faculties and temper, makes part of his education. The modification of the character, by the circumstances which act upon it, is of three sorts

—intellectual, moral, and physical. The *intellectual* character, is modified, not only by the greater or less amount of information received, but by the discipline which the mind itself undergoes, and the habits of thought and action it thereby acquires. So great is the effect of discipline, that opposite courses of management will make, of the same materials, dolts but little removed from idiocy, or poets, orators, statesmen, and philosophers. Society has the power greatly to increase the favorable and diminish the unfavorable, influences which operate on the intellect of its members, all of whom have a right to expect that this power will be exerted to the utmost in behalf of themselves and their families. The *moral* character, is modified by the tastes and habits of feeling, imbibed from the situation in which one is placed, contracted from the examples set before him, countenanced by public opinion about him, or deliberately adopted and fostered from a just conviction of his own true interests. So great is the effect of moral culture, that on this, it mainly depends whether your sons shall be tenants of an almshouse or a prison and candidates for the gallows, or be ornaments of the walks of life in which they move, fortunate and happy themselves, and benefactors and favorites of their associates. Every man, who does his duty to the community has a right to demand, that, so far as society can prevent it, no deleterious influence shall be suffered to approach him or those dependent on him, that virtue shall be countenanced and had in honor, vice discouraged and despised; in other words, that he and his family shall receive from society the best possible moral education. The *physical* character, is modified by the care we take of our health, and the degree and variety of exercise we give to our limbs and organs. The effect of training, in this respect, is wonderful, indeed almost inconceivable.

The *importance* of education is apparent from these remarks. It cannot be overrated, for it is essential. Not the degree but the excellence, of a man's education, determines his capacity for happiness and usefulness. Man, without education, is the Hottentot or the New Hollander; educate him and you produce the Demosthenes, the Chatham, the Newton, the Bowditch, the Raphael, the Thorwaldsen, the Milton, the Shakespeare,—beings capable of conceiving, in their own bosoms, and of exciting, in others, all that can ennoble, dignify, delight, persuade, or convince, their fellow creatures. These master spirits have, undoubtedly, native energies, superior to the ordinary level of intellect, but it is education, that decides whether they shall be exerted for good or for evil; that can change the ferocity of the savage, into the benevolent zeal of the philanthropist; that characterises mental power as the talent of an angel, or the capacity of a fiend. Education, therefore, since it is to make a man whatever he is, through time and through eternity, cannot engross too large a share of the public attention.

#### EDUCATION INCREASES OUR COMMAND OVER THE PRODUCTS OF NATURE.

The diffusion of sound and suitable education among all the members of a community, would enable them to push their researches to an indefinite extent into the powers and productions of physical nature, to subject these mighty agents to their will, and to render them subservient to the purposes of gain. Here are two distinct and prolific sources or instruments of wealth—the powers of nature and the productions of nature—over each of which the best educated, whether individuals or nations, have the greatest command, and can most readily and effectually turn them to account in the pursuit of riches. The connexion here specified, viz. between education and the ability to make nature herself the minister of wealth, if not received exactly as an axiom, will, I suppose, be generally acknowledged as a truth already sufficiently established by experience. All that is necessary, then, to our present purpose is to give a few exemplifications of the value of this power, in other words, the extent to which it may be applied for promoting the end supposed;—to place, as it were, an occasional buoy, indicating the channel through which the thoughts and investigations of those must flow who would come to a full understanding of the pecuniary benefits to be derived from this source.

If we look around us to ascertain our true position and cir-

cumstances, we shall find ourselves encompassed with a vast assemblage of powers,\* which all bear some relation to the human intelligence, and many of which are susceptible of being, in some way and to some extent, controlled and converted to our use, by art and skill. There is a mysterious power in the earth, which draws the loadstone always towards the same point. The discovery of this power, and the application of it to the construction of the magnetic needle and the mariner's compass, have made the ocean the highway of nations—the ocean, that liquid plain without line or landmark, which stretches over half the globe, and which suffers the mightiest ships to cut their way through its waters without leaving the least traces of its progress. Had not the intelligence of man—an intelligence, be it always remembered, drawn forth by education—made this secret influence subservient to his purposes, what would now be the state of commerce; what the condition of this mighty continent; what our knowledge of remote countries; what the civilization of the world?† It would require a volume, nay, almost a library, to develop in detail all the effects, having either a direct or a remote relation to the acquisition of wealth, of this wonderful principle, and the instruments which have been invented to render it available for human use.

There is another mysterious power in the earth, which causes all bodies on or near its surface to tend towards the centre. It is this principle which makes water seek its level and descend in streams from more elevated regions towards the ocean. But educated intelligence enables man to stay the torrent in its course, to turn it from its channel, to appropriate its moving force, and thus to make it grind his corn, manufacture his cloth, print his books, forge his iron, spin his thread, and perform many other useful and profitable services.

There is a hidden influence or power, in heat, which causes almost all known substances, to expand, and liquids in the process of expansion to assume the gaseous form. To what endless uses, in the business of life, has not civilized and educated man applied this simple principle? He has employed it to measure the state of the atmosphere, to blast the rocks with which he rears his cities, to move the "floating palace" through the water, to send the richly freighted car careering through the air, to give intensity to his destructive energies in the wars he wages with his enemies, and to set machinery of all kinds and for all purposes in motion.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth," and no human power can change its direction. But can man do nothing with it? Yes; he can and does. He spreads his canvass to the gale, catches a portion of the moving element, and traverses by its aid the broadest oceans for the purpose of traffic and of gain.

"In such a state of things," as Mr. Combe well remarks, "knowledge is truly power; and it is obviously the *interest* of human beings to become acquainted with the constitution and relations of every object around them, that they may discover its capabilities, of ministering to their advantage. Further,—where these physical energies are too great to be controlled, man has received intelligence, by which he may observe their course, and accommodate his conduct to their influence. This capacity of adaptation is a valuable substitute for the power of regulating them by his will. Man cannot arrest the sun in its course, so as to avert the wintry storm and cause perpetual spring to bloom around him; but, by the proper exercise of his intelligence and corporeal energies, he is able to foresee the approach of bleak skies and rude winds, and to place himself in safety from their injurious effects. These powers of controlling nature, and of accommodating his conduct to its course, are the direct results of his rational faculties; and in proportion to their cultivation is his sway extended. If the rain fall, and the wind blow, and the ocean billows lash against the mere animal, it must endure them all; because it cannot control their action, nor protect itself by art from their power. Man, while ignorant, continues in a condition almost equally helpless. But let him put forth his proper human capacities, [and cultivate the faculties with

\*And there are doubtless many others still hid in the womb of nature, which science will yet bring to light, and art apply to beneficial ends.

†How, indeed, without it, could the gospel be carried to the "uttermost parts of the earth?" and the last command of a suffering Saviour be fulfilled? But I did not introduce this consideration into the text, because it is not pertinent to the argument in hand.

which his creator has endowed him,] and he then finds himself invested with the power to rear, to build, to fabricate, and to store up provisions; and by availing himself of these resources, and accommodating his conduct to the course of nature's laws, he is able not only to obtain a competency, but to amass wealth, and may "smile in safety beside the cheerful hearth, when the elements maintained their fiercest war abroad."

## WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE.

"Daniel, there are two sorts of men in all ranks and ways in life, the wise and the foolish; and there are a great many degrees between them. That some foolish people have called themselves philosophers, and some wicked ones, and some who are out of their wits, is just as certain as that persons of all these descriptions are to be found among all conditions of men.

"Philosophy, Daniel, is of two kinds: that which relates to conduct, and that which relates to knowledge. The first teaches us to value all things at their real worth, to be contented with little, modest in prosperity, patient in trouble, equal minded at all times. It teaches us our duty to our neighbor and ourselves. It is that wisdom of which King Solomon speaks in our rhyme book. *Reach me the volume!*" Then turning to the passage in his favorite Du Bartas, he read these lines:—

"She's God's own mirror; she's a light whose glance  
Springs from the lightning of his countenance.  
She's mildness heaven's most sacred influence;  
Never decay her beauties excellence,  
Ay like herself; and she doth always trace  
Not only the same path but the same pace.  
Without her, honor, health and wealth would prove  
Three poisons to me. Wisdom from above  
Is the only moderatrix, spring and guide,  
Organ and honor, of all gifts beside."

"The philosopher of whom you have read in the dictionary possessed this wisdom only in part, because they were heathens, and therefore could see no further than the light of mere reason could show the way. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and they had not that to begin with. So the thoughts which ought to have made them humble produced pride, and so far their wisdom proved but folly. The humblest christian who learns his duty, and performs it as well as he can, is wiser than they. He does nothing to be seen of men; and that was their motive for most of their actions.

"Now for the philosophy which relates to knowledge. Knowledge is a brave thing. I am a plain, ignorant, untaught man, and know my ignorance. But it is a brave thing when we look around us in this wonderful world to understand something of what we see: to know something of the earth on which we move, the air which we breath, and the elements whereof we are made: to comprehend the motions of the moon and stars, and measure the distances between them, and compute times and seasons; to observe the laws which sustain the universe by keeping all things in their courses: to search into the mysteries of nature, and discover the hidden virtue of plants and stones, and read the signs and tokens which are shown us, and make out the meaning of hidden things, and apply all this to the benefit of our fellow creatures.

"Wisdom and knowledge, Daniel, make the difference between man and man, and that between man and beast is hardly greater.

"These things do not always go together. There may be wisdom without knowledge, and there may be knowledge without wisdom. A man without knowledge, if he walk humbly with his God and live in charity with his neighbors, may be wise unto salvation. A man without wisdom may not find his knowledge avail him quite so well. But it is he who possesses both that is the true philosophers. The more he knows the more he is desirous of knowing; and yet the further he advances in knowledge the better he understands how little he can attain, and the more deeply he feels that God alone can satisfy the infinite desires of an immortal soul. To understand this is the height and perfection of philosophy."

Then opening the Bible which lay before him, he read these verses from the Proverbs:—

"My son if thou wilt receive my words—

"So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;

"Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;

"If thou seekest after her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;

"Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.

"For the Lord giveth wisdom, out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.

"He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.

"He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.

"Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.

"When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;

"Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee;

"To deliver thee from the way of the evil."

"Daniel, my son," after a pause he pursued, "thou art a diligent and good lad. God hath given thee a tender and dutiful heart; keep it so, and it will be a wise one, for thou hast the beginning of wisdom. I wish thee to pursue knowledge, because in pursuing it, happiness will be found in thy way. If I have said any thing now which is above thy years, it will come to mind in after time, when I am gone, perhaps, but when thou mayest profit by it. God bless thee my child!"—  
*From "THE DOCTOR" attributed to Dr. Southey.*

## IGNORANCE AND CRIME.

## EDUCATION CHEAPER THAN IGNORANCE.

It is both cheaper and pleasanter to pay through the school committee than through the overseers of the poor, to support schools than jails, teachers than executioners, and to build writing-desks than gallows.

The Rev. Dr. B. Forde, for many years the Ordinary of Newgate, remarks, in his hints for the improvement of the police, "The ignorance of the inferior classes of society is the first and great cause of the multitudinous depredations which are daily and nightly committed. Idleness is the second. 1st. Public schools, under the care, control, and inspection of a zealous parochial committee, ought to be established throughout the whole kingdom, if possible; in which religion, morality, and a moderate degree of learning, should be taught to the poor, free of every expense. 2d. Work ought to be provided for the industrious."

Sir Richard Phillips, sheriff of London, says, that on the memorial addressed to the sheriffs by 152 criminals in Newgate, 25 only signed their names in a fair hand, 26 in an ill-gible scrawl, 101 were *marksmen*, signing with a cross. Few of the prisoners could read with facility, more than half could not read at all, most of them thought books useless, and were totally ignorant of the nature, object, and end of religion.

The same phenomenon presents itself in all American prisons. The eleventh of the admirable Reports of the Prison Discipline Society gives these facts, which might be multiplied almost indefinitely.

In Connecticut, no convict ever sent to the State prison had a liberal education, or belonged to either of the learned professions. One half were unable to write, and one sixth to read. Of the 66 convicts of 1835, the crimes of only four required for their commission ability either to read or write.

In Auburn Prison, of 228 convicts in 1835, 3 had an academical education; 59 could read, write, and cipher; 56 could read and write only; 50 could read only; and 60 could not read.

In the new penitentiary in Philadelphia, of 217 prisoners received in 1835, 83 can neither read nor write, 69 can read only, and 85 can read and write, but most of them very indifferently.

The chaplain of the Ohio penitentiary remarks: "Not only in our prison, but in others, depraved appetites and corrupt habits, which have led to the commission of crime, are usually found with the ignorant, uninformed, and duller part of mankind. Of the 276, nearly all below mediocrity, 175 are grossly ignorant, and, in point of education, scarcely capable of transacting the ordinary business of life.

Such is the universal testimony of all competent witnesses.

"Poor ignorant creatures, Sir." said a jailer to Legh Hunt, in that phrase giving a general description of all his prisoners.

We have before us the official returns of criminals for 1837, made up at the Home Department on the last day of January, and as this document is not within the reach of most of our readers, we give the facts bearing on this point, prefixing a few years for comparison, to shew the progress of crime.

The number of persons committed or bailed in England and Wales, was,

In 1828, 16,564.	1832, 20,829.	1835, 20,731.
1829, 18,675.	1833, 20,072.	1836, 20,984.
1830, 18,107.	1834, 22,451.	1837, 23,612.
1831, 19,647.		

Giving an average for the last four years of 21,944 commitments in a year,—a most melancholy fact.

For a comparison between the three kingdoms we give one year. In 1834, there were committed or bailed,

	Sentenced to Death.	Executed.
In England and Wales, 22,451.	480.	34.
Ireland, 21,381.	197.	43.
Scotland, 2,711.	6.	4.

In Ireland education is most neglected; the gibbet takes account of it. Beccaria, in 1767, predicted that the punishment of death would not survive that happy period, "when knowledge instead of ignorance shall become the portion of the greater number."

To show the effect of ignorance in the production of these crimes we give the degrees of instruction of offenders for 1837; and, to prove the gratifying fact, that the proportion of educated offenders diminishes, we give the per centage of each class for 1836, and for 1837.

	Male.	Female.	1836.	1837
Whole number of commitments.	19,407.	4,205.	—	—
Unable either to read or write.	6,684.	1,780.	33.52.	35.85.
Able to read and write imperfectly.	10,147.	2,151.	52.33.	52.08.
Able to read and write well.	2,057.	177.	10.56.	9.46.
Instruction superior to mere reading and writing well.	98.	3.	0.91.	0.43.
Instruction could not be ascertained.	421.	94.	2.68.	2.18.

Of all the criminal offenders, therefore, be it remembered, less than one half of one per cent. have received any education beyond reading and writing. There were 358 offenders of twelve years or under, and more than half of these young sinners were totally uninstructed.

Lord Justice Clerk, having noticed the inferior number of criminals in Scotland, proceeds to say, that, supposing his calculation to be accurate, it calls upon us for very serious reflection to discover the causes of this proud inferiority.

"I think we have not far to look," says his Lordship, "for the causes of the good order and morality of our people."

"The institution of parochial schools, in the manner and to the extent in which they are established in Scotland, is, I believe, peculiar to ourselves; and it is an institution, to which, however simple in its nature and unobtrusive in its operation, I am persuaded we are chiefly to ascribe the regularity of conduct by which we are distinguished. The child of the meanest peasant, of the lowest mechanic in this country, may and most of them do, receive a virtuous education from their earliest youth. At our parochial schools, they are not only early initiated in the principles of our holy religion, and in the soundest doctrines of morality, but most of them receive different degrees of education in other respects, which qualified them to earn their bread in life in various ways; and which, independent even of religious instruction, by enlarging the understanding, necessarily raises a man in his own estimation, and sets him above the mean and dirty crimes to which the temptations and hardships of life might otherwise expose him."

"The early establishment of parochial schools, &c. \* \* \* have unquestionably raised the character and improved the condition of the lower orders in Scotland, have arrested the progress of vice and idleness, and have rendered the maintenance and management of the poor a comparatively easy task, and a work of real benevolence."

In twenty-two years from 1750, there were 116 executions in the Midland counties, 117 in the Norfolk circuit; and in twenty-two years from 1749, there were 678 in London, or about thirty per annum; while in Scotland, as near the same period as we can ascertain, they averaged less than four per annum.

The Scotch school system was originated by an act of King James the 6th, of the 10th of December, 1616, four years before the landing of the Pilgrims, and ratified by an act of Charles the First, 1633; but the first effectual provision was by an act of 1646, for the first time compelling the assessment of a tax and payment of a master's salary, in every parish in the kingdom, for the express purpose of educating the poor; "a law," says the enthusiastic Scotch writer last quoted, "which may challenge comparison with any act of legislation to be found in the records of history, whether we consider the wisdom of the ends in view, the simplicity of the means employed, or the provisions made to render these means effectual to their purpose." This excellent statute was, of course, repealed on the restoration of Charles the Second, in 1660; but it was re-enacted in 1696, in precisely the same terms, and is the basis of the present system, the noble legacy of the Scottish Parliament. Its effect on national character may be considered to have commenced about the period of the Union, 1707, and, with the peace and security arising from that event to have produced the extraordinary change in favor of industry and good morals, which the character of the common people of Scotland has since undergone.

The school system has not operated differently in Scotland from its uniform effect wherever it has been tried. Holland, Prussia, and the Pays de Vaud, the best educated countries in Europe, are also the most moral. Prussia, which has carried her common school system to higher perfection than any other nation, is remarkably free from crime. For seventeen years ending in 1834, according to the statement of Herr Von Kampf the executions in Prussia were 123; in 1832, 33 and 34, there were two in each year, and the average number of murders in a year was seven and one third. Prussia has a population of 13,566,897, according to the Weimar Almanac for 1837.—These numbers, therefore, are much smaller in proportion to population than in Massachusetts; lesser crimes, it is believed are proportionally rare in Prussia.

To show how great has been the influence of the school establishment of Scotland on the peasantry of that country, it is only necessary to revert to the description given by that true hearted patriot, Fletcher, of Saltoun. In the year 1698, he declared, that, "There are at this day in Scotland, 200,000 people begging from door to door. And though the number of them be perhaps double to what it was formerly, by reason of this present great distress (a famine then prevailed,) yet in all times there have been about 100,000 of these vagabonds, who have lived without any regard or subjection either to the laws of the land, or even those of God and nature." He then ascribes to them abominations too vile to be quoted; and goes on to tell us, that no magistrate ever could discover that they had been baptized, or in what way one in a hundred went out of the world. They lived in promiscuous incest, and were guilty of robbery, and sometimes murder. "In years of plenty," says he, "many thousands of them meet together in the mountains where they feast and riot for many days; and at country weddings, markets, burials, and other public occasions, they are to be seen, both men and women, perpetually drunk, cursing, blaspheming, and fighting together."

This is no true picture of Scottish life now. In less than half a century from Fletcher's time, common schools had softened this savage race, and in less than a century transformed them into the most moral and orderly people in Europe.—There are few beggars in Scotland; there are no poor rates in Scotland; while in England every eighth or ninth man is a pauper, and the poor rate for forty years has consumed some 5 or 6,000,000 of pounds sterling a year. In Scotland the wages of labor maintain the laboring classes; in England they are inadequate by an alarming deficiency. In Scotland they have fewer crimes, and those which occur are less malignant. In 1834, the proportions were as follows:

	Sentenced to Death.	Executed.	Life.	14 years.	7 years.
In England,	480.	34.	864.	688.	2,501.
Scotland,	6.	4.	30.	47.	195.

These are the points of difference. England saves the expense of public schools, and the saving costs her 50,000,000 of dollars a year in courts, prisons, penal colonies, and poor rates not to reckon ruined hopes, broken hearts, blasted characters, and the wretchedness of tens of thousands living in shame and agony, a living death, whom free schools would have brought up to honor and happiness and a useful life. England has left the public morality to take care of itself and the comment is heard in groans and written in blood.

*R. Rantoul, Jr.'s. Remarks on Education.*

From Wines' Hints on Popular Education.

#### WAR AND EDUCATION.

Mr. Dick has shewn that the wars in which England was engaged between 1688 and 1815, a period of one hundred and twenty-seven years, cost that nation eleven thousand six hundred and sixty-five millions of dollars. It is reasonable to suppose that the nations against which those wars were waged, expended an equal sum; and, if so, it gives us a grand total of twenty-three thousand three hundred and thirty millions of dollars, as the cost of wars in which Great Britain was concerned during that comparatively short period. Let us, however, make every allowance for an over-estimate, and call it twenty thousand millions. How much would this sum do towards educating the world? If we estimate the present population of the globe at eight hundred millions, there will be of this number two hundred millions of an age suitable for attending school. An average of eighty pupils would give two millions five hundred thousand schools for the whole world. Twenty thousand millions of dollars divided among these, would give each eight thousand. Three thousand dollars of this would be enough to purchase and improve twenty acres of land, to erect a house sufficient to accommodate the school and the teacher's family, and to provide suitable apparatus for illustrating the simpler principles of chemistry and experimental philosophy. Five thousand dollars would still remain to each school, which, if invested at an interest of six per cent, would yield three hundred dollars a year. Thus, the wars of Europe, for the brief period of only a hundred and odd years, have cost an amount of money sufficient to establish popular schools, on the most liberal scale, throughout the whole world, and to supply them with suitable instruction to the end of time! Truly, when ambition and revenge are to be gratified, when tyranny is to be supported, when the human race is to be slaughtered by millions, when the demon of war is to be unchained, and all the arts of mischief and destruction which he has devised are to be brought into operation,—there is no want of funds to carry such schemes into effect. But when it is a question of elevating man to his proper place in the scale of mental and moral being, and thus augmenting his happiness beyond all calculation, the eyes of nations are suddenly opened to behold their poverty, economy becomes the first of national duties, and Government, from an excessive regard for the people's money, refuses to provide for the people's most important interests.

#### LABOR IN ARISTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS.

Where society is divided into classes by hereditary distinctions—one class created to possess, to enjoy, to govern, to be honored, and another class destined to obtain by toil a scanty subsistence, or in more fortunate instances a humble competency,—labor is of course dishonored. Those who are born to labor, feel that their lot is degradation; they are made to feel it by all the arrangements of society. Human nature every where, and under all political institutions, is prone enough to despise labor, and to honor as the favorites of fortune or of Providence those who have nothing to do; but in the state of society of which we are speaking, that propensity, instead of being counteracted, as the author of our nature designed it should be, is pampered to a monstrous growth. Man was made for employment—made to provide for himself, and to enjoy what he has the more for its being the fruit of his industry; and that constitution of society only is in accordance with the constitution of individual man, in which each individual has scope for the exercise of his powers, and is stimulated to a wholesome activity. Society is not yet so constituted in the old world; though by successive changes it is continually approximating towards such a constitution. Meanwhile the old contempt for labor remains, acting and re-acting between the two great classes into which

society is divided,—the mere consumers despising the producers, and the producers therefore despising themselves,—the unproductive consumers, blessing themselves as the favorites of heaven,—and the producers, on the other hand, envying the consumers and ever learning to hate them.

In our own country, different sorts of labor are of course held in different degrees of honor. Those employments which require high intellectual and moral qualifications, cannot but be regarded among us as more honorable than mere muscular drudgery; for it is naturally presumed that the man is furnished with those personal qualities which are necessary in his employment. Still, with us, no sort of honest labor is dishonorable. Our country has thousands of legislators and magistrates who cultivate their own acres with their own hands, and who think none the less of themselves on that account, and are none the less thought of by their fellow citizens. But under other systems, the different kinds of labor, instead of being more or less honorable, are only more or less dishonorable. Where the highest class is supposed to find its honor and its felicity in doing nothing, there the necessity of earning one's bread in order to eat it, is a dishonor—a mark of inferiority; and each particular kind of labor is higher or lower on the scale of respectability, not in proportion to the demand which it makes for a higher or lower order of qualifications, but in proportion as it brings men nearer to the level, and secures for them the patronage or the deference of the unlaboring aristocracy. Even in the middle ages the man of science or of letters, the physician, the learned clerk, the skilful artizan, could command from peer and king something of the respect due to intellectual and personal superiority, but still the superiority of knowledge and of virtue, was as nothing before the greatness of hereditary wealth and power. As civilization advances, the aristocratic class becomes more educated, and seeks to ally itself more closely with the intellectual class. Thus the dignity of idleness is placed side by side with the dignity of intellectual power, till by degrees men begin to see the difference. And while idleness is thus insensibly losing its exclusive honors, industry itself begins to be delivered from its reproach; for knowledge is continually spreading wider and lower among the laboring classes; and political power is passing, sometimes by gradual reform, and anon by the convulsive shock of revolution, from the few to the many. But ages must yet elapse before the effects of the old order of things shall be effaced from the manners and from the opinions and feelings of the whole people.

I have not forgotten that there are causes at work in our own country to degrade the true nobility of labor. I have not forgotten the ambition of some to import the ideas and to ape the habits of European life. This, however, though aided by the constant circulation of English "tales of fashionable life," and of other things in the same style, can have but little efficacy in counteracting the tendency of the great facts of our condition. The fact that here the cultivators of the soil are the lords of the soil, will stand in spite of Blackwood's Magazine and Bulwer's novels, and in spite of the endeavors of here and there a rich man to make himself unhappy by living in the state and pomp of aristocratic laziness. And so in spite of all such influences, the fact will stand, that here all political power is in the hands of those who live by industry; and that other fact that the few who can live without labor, are too few and too scattered to constitute a class, and that of them not one in five is willing to live without some active and useful employment. Nor have I forgotten that, by a mournful anomaly in the political organization of some portions of our country—an anomaly contradictory of all the principles and tendencies of the American civilization—labor is, in those localities, dishonorable. That anomaly must pass away. The American structure of society must predominate here to the exclusion of every hostile element, or its very foundations must be subverted. The soil of freedom must be cultivated by the hands of freemen, or the time will come when from each traditional hill, and from each sacred battle-field, the voices of the guardian genii will be heard in tones of grief, "Let us depart." Where is the man, calling himself an American, who does not in his heart believe that this dark anomaly will pass away; and that the time will come, when no spot in our vast union shall be profaned by a fettered step, or by the stroke of an unwilling hand, but every where jocund labor shall look up to heaven in the conscious nobleness of perfect freedom.

*Rev. L. Bacon.*

#### VALUE OF BOOKS TO WOMAN.

And how without books as the grand means of intellectual cultivation, are the daughters of the State to obtain that knowledge on a thousand subjects, which is so desirable in the character of a female, as well as so essential to the discharge of the duties to which she is destined? Young men, it may be said, have a larger circle of action; they are more in promiscuous society,—at least they have a far wider range of business occupations,—all of which stimulate thought, suggest inquiry and furnish means for improvement. But the sphere of females is domestic. Their life is comparatively secluded. The proper delicacy of the sex forbids them from appearing in the promiscuous marts of business, and even from mingling, as actors, in those less boisterous arenas, where mind is the acting agent, as well as the object to be acted upon. If then, she is precluded from these sources of information, and these incitements to inquiry; if, by the unanimous and universal

opinion of civilized nations, when she breaks away from comparative seclusion and retirement, she leaves her charms behind her; and if, at the same time she is debarred from access to books, by what means, through what channels, is she to obtain the knowledge so indispensable for the fit discharge of maternal and domestic duties, and for rendering herself an enlightened companion for intelligent man? Without books, except in cases of extraordinary natural endowment, she will be doomed to relative ignorance and incapacity. Nor can her daughters in their turn, escape the same fate, for their minds will be weakened by the threefold cause of transmission, inculcation, and example. Steady results follow from steady causes; under such influences, therefore, if not averted, the generations must deteriorate from the positive to the superlative in mental feebleness and imbecility.

#### CONDITION AND PROSPECTS OF EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES.

We continue our extracts from such educational documents as we have received from other states. We should like to follow up this account of education in the United States with copious extracts from President Bache's Report on Education in Europe, lately made to the Trustees of Girard College, of which he is President. The Report occupies more than 600 pages octavo, and is one of the most valuable contributions which has been made to the cause of education.

#### INDIANA.—GOV. WALLACE'S MESSAGE.

"To effect this object, the creation of a Board of Instruction would probably be the most successful—a Board whose duty it should be to superintend the establishment of schools in every county; to see that the funds are carefully husbanded and equitably distributed; to provide competent teachers; and by public addresses, or otherwise, to wake up and encourage the people to lend a helping hand in forwarding so noble an undertaking.

That we have abundant means already provided with which to operate successfully and profitably on this plan, cannot, I think, be rationally denied. According to the very able and interesting report of Judge Kinney, prepared with great care and labor, as chairman of the committee on education of the last House of Representatives, we will have by 1850, in the saline fund, the tax on bank stock, the surplus revenue, the reserved sixteen sections of land, the sinking fund of bank stock, the unsold saline lands, the lands returned as delinquent to the School Commissioners, a capital rising four millions of dollars—two millions of which are now within the absolute control and may be applied at any moment by the Legislature. The latter sum, therefore, judiciously invested, may be made productive of a revenue of at least one hundred and fifty thousand dollars per annum—enough certainly to answer present purposes and to ensure a safe and prosperous beginning.

One of the greatest difficulties we have at present to encounter is the scarcity of competent and qualified school teachers; to remedy which, a scheme something like this has been suggested, namely:—to authorize a separate department in the State University under the control of its President, devoted, exclusively, to preparing and qualifying young men for the duties of professional teachers. To the attainment of this object, the proceeds of the saline fund, amounting to some two thousand dollars per annum, might be profitably applied. This would enable the State to provide that the necessary books and tuition should be furnished free of expense, and that each county should be entitled to send one or more of its most deserving and promising young men."

#### PENNSYLVANIA.

##### SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS.

We are indebted to the Hon. Fas. R. SHUNK for a copy of his Annual Report to the Legislature, made March 3d, 1840. We shall make such extracts as will show the condition and progress of common schools, in this great central State, and tend to advance the same great cause in Connecticut. We admire the catholic spirit which pervades the whole document.

##### COMMON SCHOOL EDUCATION A CAUSE OF GENERAL INTEREST.

General education, by means of Common Schools, is one of the invaluable improvements of modern times. Its effect upon the con-

dition of man are as yet but imperfectly developed. Its tendencies are so directly towards the elevation of his moral and intellectual faculties, that no rational doubt remains of its capacity, and its power, to effect a revolution by which the rank and dignity of human nature will be vindicated, human rights be established, and the broadest and deepest foundations laid for the security of the peace, happiness, and prosperity of the world. Most of the powerful monarchies in Europe, urged on by a power which they cannot resist, are now engaged in providing the means of education for all their children; and advances in this career of true greatness have been made by some of them, which equal, if they do not outstrip, the progress made in the same cause in these republican States. In giving impulse to this onward march of the human mind, there may be rivalry, but there can be no jealousy. The development of the physical, moral and intellectual faculties of the people of Norway, or of Switzerland, is regarded with the same complacency by the philanthropist in America, engaged in promoting the cause of universal education, as a similar event in his own State. The education of the whole race is his object; and every portion in which the great and good work progresses, lessens the amount of the labor yet to be performed, and hastens the period when his hopes will be realized.

##### PROGRESS OF THE COMMON SCHOOL SYSTEM.

The first permanent provision for the establishment of a system of Common School education in Pennsylvania, was made by the act of 1st of April, 1834, entitled "An act to establish a General System of Education by Common Schools."

By this act, the city of Philadelphia, and each county in the Commonwealth, was erected into a school division; and every ward, township and borough in the State, was erected into a school district; and each district was to contain a competent number of common school for the education of every child within its limits.

Provision was made for the election of six directors in each district; for their organization, the choice of officers, and of a delegate to a county convention, to be held annually at the county court house in each division, to consist of the said delegates and the county commissioners. This convention was authorized to determine the question, whether or not a tax should be levied for the expenditure of each district—not to be less in amount than double the funds to be furnished out of the treasury of the Commonwealth.

Detailed provisions were made in cases where a majority of the convention voted against an appropriation for common schools; for the adoption of the system in districts whose delegates voted in the affirmative, and for the payment to them of the State appropriation; also, for the continuance in force of the acts of Assembly for the education of the poor gratis, in the divisions or districts opposed to the adoption of common schools. Meetings of the people in each accepting district were afterwards to be held, to decide whether they would raise, for the current year, a sum in addition to that determined on at the county convention, to be applied in aid of the common schools of the district. Provision was made for the collection of the school tax, and the directors of each district were required to determine upon the number of schools to be opened, to provide school houses, to appoint capable teachers at liberal salaries, to pay the expenses, and have the general superintendence of the schools. They were also authorized to connect instruction in the mechanic arts, and in agricultural pursuits, with intellectual and moral instruction.

They were directed to visit every school at least once in every month; and to make a detailed report of the number of scholars, their studies, the number of months taught, the salaries and qualifications of teachers, &c. to the district inspectors. Two inspectors for each district were to be appointed annually, by the several courts of Quarter Sessions, who were required to visit every school, at least quarterly, and to inquire into the moral character, learning and ability of the several teachers; and to examine persons wishing to be employed as teachers, and, if found qualified, to give certificates to that effect, to be valid for one year. A general meeting of all the inspectors in a division was authorized, for the purpose of adopting rules for the examination of teachers, forms of certificates to be given to them, &c. No certificate to be given to any teacher unless found qualified to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic. The inspectors were required, annually, on the first Monday of November, to make a detailed report of the condition of the schools to the Superintendent.

The Secretary of the Commonwealth was designated the Superintendent of all the public Schools, and was required to make an annual report to the Legislature upon the condition of the common schools, furnish estimates and accounts of expenditures, plans of improvement, &c., to prepare forms of district reports, to sign orders on the treasury for the payment of school money, and to settle controversies in relation to the distribution of the State appropriation.

The sum of seventy-five thousand dollars was appropriated for the year 1835, and the same sum annually to be paid to the county treasurers in the several school divisions; and provision was made

for its distribution, and for the appointment of district treasurers, whose accounts were to be settled in the same manner as accounts of other township officers. The supervisors of townships, and the councils of boroughs, were authorized to hold property, necessary for the establishment and support of common schools. County treasurers were authorized to receive all school monies, from whatever source they might arise; provision was made for the settlement of their accounts, and for collecting balances in their hands. The city and county of Philadelphia were excluded from the provisions of the act, but their share of appropriations out of the school fund was secured.

Under this act, the first report of the Superintendent of Common Schools to the Legislature was made on the second March, 1835. This report, being the first, is necessarily imperfect in many of its details; yet sufficient appears upon its face to show that a majority of the common school districts in the State had accepted the system.

At the next session of the legislature, on the 15th of April, 1835, a supplement to the act to establish general system of education by common schools was passed, which made further provisions in relation to the assessment and laying of the school tax. It abolished the office of inspector, and transferred the duties of inspectors to the directors of the districts. Further provisions were made in relation to the proceedings of the delegate meetings, and to the tax voted to be raised, and for continuing the acts of the Assembly providing for the education of the poor gratis in districts where a majority of the inhabitants decided against accepting the common school law, and for preserving the state appropriation for such districts for two years.

Under the Common School law thus amended, two reports of the proceedings for the year 1835, were made to the legislature at the session of 1835-6; the one on the 5th of December, 1835, and the other on the 20th of February, 1836; these two reports constitute the second annual report of the superintendent.

From these it appears that there were in 1835, in the State, about nine hundred and seven school districts: of which five hundred and thirty seven had accepted the law, and three hundred and seventy one had not accepted it.

On the 13th of June, 1836, an act was passed to consolidate and amend the several acts relative to the general system of education by Common Schools; this act, with the supplement thereto, passed on the 12th of April, 1838, constitute the present Common School laws of Pennsylvania; they contain, together with amendments and additions, all the principal features of the prior acts in relation to the duties to be performed, and the objects to be accomplished; with this difference, that all the duties imposed by prior acts upon other agents, are by these laws concentrated upon the directors of the several Common School districts; each district is erected into a separate government for school purposes, in which the people and the directors appoint the agents required to carry into effect all the provisions of the Common School laws. By the act of the 13th June, 1836, the annual State appropriation, was increased to two hundred thousand dollars.

By a special resolution of 3d April, 1837, the appropriation to Common Schools, for the year commencing in June, 1837, was increased \$500,000, "to be applied by the several districts either for the building, repairing, or purchasing school houses, or for education as they may deem best." By the supplement of 1838, the annual permanent appropriation was increased to a sum equal to one dollar for each taxable citizen in the Commonwealth.

<i>Summary,</i>	1835	1837	1839
Receipt from the State treasury, \$29,460.33	\$553,286.06	\$316,404.92	
Receipt from School Tax,	231,552.36	382,527.89	
Expenditures for School Houses, —	202,230.52	161,384.06	
Whole number of School districts,	987	1033	
Number of accepting do.	603	840	
Number of non-accepting do.	384	193	
Number of Scholars,	100,000	182,355	254,908
No. of mos. the schools were open, 3 mos. 12d.	6 mos.	5 mos. 8d	
It thus appears, that the whole amount received by the accepting districts from the State Treasury, in five years, is			\$1,408,812.31
That the whole amount received since 1835, by the same districts from school tax, is			1,206,973.62
Aggregate receipts,			
That the amount paid in four years for erecting, purchasing, renting, and repairing school houses, is			\$2,615,785.93
Balance.			
			\$1,291,236.12

Leaving the sum of \$1,991,236.12, which has been expended in five years under the provisions of the acts providing for the establishment of education by Common Schools, for teaching, fuel, and contingencies.

**CONDITION OF THE SCHOOLS, 1839.**

Whole number of districts exclusive of the city and county of Philadelphia,	1060
Whole number of accepting districts,	887
"      "      "      of districts reported,	633
Whole number of schools in accepting districts,	5649
Average length of schools,	5 mos. 8 d.
Number of teachers, { Male,	4488
Female,	2050
Average salaries per month, { Male,	\$19,394
Female,	12,03
Whole number of Scholars, { Male,	254,908.00
Female,	113,784
Average number of scholars to each school,	413
Average cost of each scholar per quarter,	1,364
Whole amount of State appropriation,	\$350,061.00
Amount of State appropriation to accepting districts,	354,086.00
Amount of tax assessed in do.	295,018.00
Whole amount of School Fund in do.	650,004.00
Amount paid for building, &c. school houses.	161,384.06

In a number of towns, the schools of districts are divided into several classes; and the children, as they progress in the acquirement of knowledge, are advanced to the next higher school.

From the reports received, it appears that reading, writing and arithmetic are taught in all the primary schools in the State; and that in nearly all of them, geography and grammar are taught in addition; and that in a goodly number, surveying, mensuration, algebra, natural philosophy, history, and astronomy, or some of these branches are taught.

## DEFICIENCY OF WELL QUALIFIED TEACHERS.

One of the principal obstacles which has retarded the progress of the system, is the want of an adequate number of teachers in our primary schools. This deficiency springs from two prominent causes:—

1. The compensation of teachers is not generally sufficient to command the services of the best men, and
2. The demand of the system for teachers exceeds the supply we have of that valuable class of citizens.

It is true that, in a number of districts, particularly in those where the schools are kept open during the whole year, the compensation of teachers is adequate, but it will not be denied that, in general, the price paid is not sufficient to command the best talents, more especially in districts where the schools are only kept open three or six months in the year. In these, the compensation should be sufficient, in addition to the actual value of the services, to indemnify good teachers for the loss and inconvenience of being diverted from other employments for a part of the year. Although many persons accept the office of teacher from higher motives than the love of money, and more is thus received than is compensated, yet the system ought not to depend upon such precarious supplies; it should possess the ability, within itself, to command the best talents.

The other prominent cause of the deficiency in the number of teachers, is, that the demands of the system for teachers exceed the supply we have of that valuable class of citizens.

When we reflect that we have now in Pennsylvania 5,649 primary schools; that this number has most rapidly increased in the five years during which the system has been in operation; that the average period during which the schools were kept open annually is less than six months; and that the average compensation of male teachers has been less than \$20 per month, and that of female teachers has been only about \$12 per month; it is not surprising that the demand of the system for teachers exceeds the supply.

**SCHOOL MEETINGS RECOMMENDED.**

With the view of increasing the number of teachers independently of legislative aid, I addressed a circular on the 27th of last August, to each board of school directors in the State, in which was recommended to them the propriety of adopting measures to direct public attention to the subject of education, by calling meetings of the people for the purpose of deliberating upon the wants of the system, and devising means for its improvement; it was supposed that by invoking the power of public opinion, many young men, and other competent persons might be induced to devote a part of their time to the instruction of youth, and thus add to the number of teachers, and to the respectability of the office. The opinion that much good may be effected by these means is still entertained.

## MANUAL FOR SCHOOL TEACHERS.

It is also hoped, that some competent individual, abounding in practical knowledge upon the subject, will prepare and publish a manual for teachers of our primary schools, in which the best means which experience in this and other countries furnishes for imparting instruction in the branches taught in these schools, will be systematized. If all that is known upon this interesting subject were thus

embodied by a master hand, the work would be of incalculable value. There are many men who possess the adequate knowledge for teachers who are defective in the art of communicating it.—These would be greatly benefited by the wisdom and experience of the best teachers of the age.

Connected with the art of teaching scholars, is that of governing a school; this, like that of governing communities, is a science, the principles of which, if properly arranged by the light of experience and philosophy, would add an inestimable item to the knowledge of our teachers.

#### NORMAL SCHOOLS.

But a more effectual method to increase the number of teachers, and to furnish facilities for extending the knowledge of the art of teaching, and improving this department of public instruction, is, by the establishment of teachers' seminaries, commonly called Normal schools; these institutions exist in other states and countries, and are said to be productive of great advantages.

The establishment of these seminaries is an object worthy the attention of the Legislature, as a valuable means of laying the sure foundation for supplying all our primary schools with an adequate number of teachers. It is recommended that the work be commenced by dividing the State into a convenient number of normal school districts, not more than five, and to authorize the appointment of three school commissioners, in each of the districts, with power to collect information upon the subject of organizing, governing and conducting teachers' seminaries; the branches to be taught, the mode of instruction, and the expenses, &c. That they meet on a certain day, and, in conjunction with the Superintendent of Common Schools, examine and deliberate upon all the information obtained, and adopt a plan for the establishment of normal schools in the several districts, at such time, and in such manner as may be directed by law. It would be prudent to make provision for erecting one of those institutions, at an early period, in the central district, for the purpose of testing the utility and practicability of the plan.

#### INDIFFERENCE OF PARENTS—COMMON SCHOOL JOURNAL.

Another obstacle in the way of the progress of our system of education, is the indifference which prevails in many districts, among the parents and guardians of the children who are taught in the primary schools; they elect their directors, pay their school tax, and then leave the subject entirely in the hands of their agents, without exercising that anxious superintending care which the importance of the work and the interest at stake demands. Directors are not quickened in the discharge of their duties, by the vigilance of their constituents, nor are they cheered in the execution of a laborious office which yields no profit by their approbation.

It was partly the object of the circular to the directors of the 27th August already referred to, to remove this indifference. Another means for advancing an object so desirable, would be the publication, at the seat of government, of a Common School Journal, under the supervision of the Superintendent. A periodical paper of this kind, if properly conducted, will be of immense value to the system; it should contain judicious selections of information relating to common school education, and be made the medium of communicating to the several school districts history of the proceedings had in the Commonwealth in relation to education; it should be sent to every school district, and to the editor of every newspaper in the State. It has been a subject of regret that the public press has not hitherto manifested its wonted zeal in the advancement of great public interests, by taking an active part in collecting and publishing valuable details in relation to the character, progress, and utility of general education, the immovable pillar which sustains civil liberty. The regular receipt of a periodical devoted to this subject, would, it is presumed, arrest the attention of our editors, and induce them to appropriate some part of their columns regularly to the promulgation of interesting facts pertaining to this element of modern society, a salutary effect would thus be produced upon public opinion, and that indifference which now prevails would soon vanish.

#### THE PROPERTY OF THE COMMUNITY BOUND TO SUPPORT COMMON SCHOOLS.

Where the system of education by Common Schools is adopted, the principle is assumed, that the property of the community is bound by every obligation of interest and of duty to provide a Common School education for every child in it. The same principle governs in making public roads, maintaining courts of justice, &c. and where private advantage is promoted by advancing the general good. The property in every district and county is perpetually changing owners. By the happy institutions of this country, where no artificial contrivances exist to retain estates in particular fami-

lies, every species of property circulates with great rapidity.—Under these circumstances, there can be no injustice, if only a short term of years is taken into view, in promoting the public good, by making the general property liable for the payment of the expenses of general education, without reference as to who may be the owners. Every man expects to acquire himself, or hopes that his descendants will acquire, a full share of the existing property, and no man, however large his possessions, who reflects by the light of experience, expects that all his descendants will be equally fortunate with himself; hence the hopes of the one, and the fears of the other, present the strongest motives for all who love their offspring, to lay the deepest and most durable foundation for securing to them a sound practical education.

#### COMMON SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

The heavy expenses incident to commencing operations under our system; the want of unanimity in its adoption, and the difficulty in securing united effort in the accepting districts, have hitherto limited the attention of the friends of common school education, to the erection of school-houses, and the establishment of schools. We shall soon reach, if we have not already reached, a point in our progress where still further advances in the diffusion of knowledge, will arrest the attention, and claim the patronage of the Legislature and the people. Among the most prominent advances to be made, is the establishment of Common School Libraries, in every school district. This cheap, simple and efficient method of placing within the reach of the whole people, a body of valuable knowledge is one of the comprehensive purposes of modern society. A Common School Library, should embrace works upon every department of science and literature, and should be particularly illustrative of the history of our own country, of its institutions, and of the manners and customs of our own people.

The State of New York has appropriated 55,000 dollars annually, for five years, to be applied to the purchase of books for district libraries, to be distributed to the school districts in the same manner, and proportions, as the public school money, and upon the like terms and conditions; and provision has been made for the organization of school libraries, in every school district of that State.

In Massachusetts, there is now publishing under the sanction of their Board of Education, "The School Library," to consist of one hundred volumes. Ten volumes of this work have been published, including Irving's Life of Columbus—Paley's Natural Theology—lives of eminent individuals, celebrated in American history, and The Sacred Philosophy of the Seasons. These works are executed in a masterly and beautiful manner, and are offered to the public at the lowest possible price. The Board "guaranty to the public the general merit of each volume to be published, its fitness to form part of such a series, and its freedom from any thing offensive to good taste, good morals, or any sect or party among our numerous religious and political divisions."

The establishment of school libraries, in connection with common school education, is among the powerful means of extending the diffusion of knowledge devised by freemen to perpetuate freedom. The value and necessity of which cannot be better expressed, or enforced, than by quoting the following extracts from the writings of three of the illustrious founders of our institutions. General Washington says: "Promote, then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it should be enlightened."

Mr. Jefferson, in a letter to a citizen of Virginia, says:—"By far the most important bill in our own code, is that for diffusing knowledge among the people. *No other sure foundation can be devised for the preservation of freedom and happiness.* Make a crusade against ignorance, and establish and improve the law for educating the common people; for without going into the monitory history of the ancient world, in all its quarters, and at all its periods, that of the soil on which we live and of its occupants, indigenous and emigrans, teaches the awful lesson that no nation is permitted to live in ignorance with impunity."

Mr. Madison says:—"Throughout the civilized world, nations are courting the praise of fostering science and the useful arts, and are opening their eyes to the principles and blessings of representative government. The American people owe it to themselves, and to the cause of free government, to prove, by their establishments for the advancement and diffusion of knowledge, that their political institutions, which are attracting observation from every quarter, are as favorable to the intellectual and moral improvement of man, as they are conformable to his individual and social rights. What spectacle can be more edifying or more reasonable than that of liberty and learning, each leaning on the other for their mutual and surest support."

"It is universally admitted, that a well instructed people alone can be a permanently free people."

## SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

Our secondary schools include Female Seminaries and Academies. By the act of 12th April, 1838, appropriations for ten years are made to the institutions, averaging from \$300 to \$500 annually, to each, in proportion to the number of pupils taught.

Under this law there was paid at the State Treasury, In 1838, to Academies \$3,790 00 to Female Seminaries \$700 00 1839, to do. 21,329 87 to do. do. 8,413 83

Twenty-nine Female Seminaries and fifty-two Academies, are in the receipt of aid from the Commonwealth.

## FEMALE SEMINARIES.

The average number of pupils in each of the Female Seminaries which reported, is thirty-six; the medium price of tuition for one year is \$15 63, and the medium amount of the whole expense of a pupil for one year, including boarding, &c. is \$129. The number preparing for teaching common schools is nine. In these Seminaries, which constitute the highest schools for the education of females we have in our system, are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, geography, rhetoric, history, natural and moral philosophy, composition, botany, chemistry, astronomy, French, Latin and Greek languages, mathematics, drawing, painting and music.—Amongst the greatest blessings that spring from free government is, the restoration to woman of her proper rank in the creation. Her native loveliness here yields its native power—her mind receives the comprehensive instruction which qualifies her to fulfil her high destiny. It is most delightful to observe her moral and intellectual elevation, by means of our Primary Schools, and Female Seminaries; for upon these happy developments, the christian and the patriot rely as the security of religion and freedom.

## ACADEMIES.

The Academies are the connecting link between the Common Schools and the Colleges. The average number of pupils in each of those which have reported, is fifty-one.

The medium price of tuition for a year, is 18.50, and the medium amount of the whole expense of a pupil for one year, including boarding, &c. is \$130. The whole number of teachers preparing themselves for teaching common schools, is ninety-one.

The mistaken opinion is sometimes entertained, that the vigorous prosecution of the system of education by common schools, diminishes the support of the secondary schools. But the truth is, that when the primary and secondary schools are well regulated, and well conducted, the latter are sustained by the former—they are filled with scholars from the primary schools, who seek for higher attainments in knowledge.

## SUPERIOR SCHOOLS.

The Colleges in our State have been, in this report, designated superior schools. The same act of the 12th April, 1838, which patronizes Female Seminaries and Academies, make an annual appropriation for ten years, of \$1,000 to each University and College maintaining four Professors, and instructing constantly at least one hundred students. Under the provisions of this act, there was paid to the nine Colleges at the State Treasury,

In 1838,	• • • •	\$3,500 00
In 1839,	• • • •	9,250 00

## RECAPITULATION.

During the last year, there was 1,170 students in the University and Colleges, and in the Preparatory Schools there were forty-four students qualifying themselves to become teachers in Common Schools. That the medium price of tuition for one year, including fuel and contingencies, is \$33 75; and that the medium amount of all the expenses of a student for one year, including boarding, is \$121 00.

From a review of the operations of our system of education, so far as it is under the care of, or receives direct patronage from the State, the following results appear:

That during the last year, there were in the University and 7 Colleges, constantly educated 1,170 scholars. In 52 Academies, there were, 2,652 do. In 29 Female Seminaries, there were 1,044 do. In 5,649 Primary Schools, there were 254,908 do. Grand total, 259,774

## DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES IN NEW YORK.

In the year 1835, the legislature of the state of New York authorized its school districts to raise, by tax, a sum not exceeding \$20, for the first year, and \$10 for every succeeding year, for establishing district school libraries. The law remained for three years, almost a dead letter upon the statute

book; very few of the districts exercising the power it granted. But, in 1838, Gov. MARCY, in his Inaugural Address, called the attention of the legislature to the subject again, in the remarks which we copy below. During the session of that year the GLORIOUS LAW was passed, for encouraging the districts to procure libraries, by appropriating a portion of the income of the school fund, to such districts as would raise, by tax, an equal sum, for the same purpose; and, at the present time, there is scarcely a district in the state, which has not taken, or is not now taking, the requisite steps for the procurement of a district school library. How long will the recommendation of the governor, and the law subsequently passed in pursuance of it, outlive those party contests, which, at the time, occupied so much larger a share of the public attention! When the collisions and bickerings of that day are forgotten, the influences of this day will flow on, widening and deepening, in an endless progression of usefulness.—*Mass. C. S. Journal.*

All classes of our constituents will look with much anxiety and high hopes to your proceedings on the subject of Education. As the friends of civil liberty, and the possessors of the legislative power of a free people, we are commanded by the dictates of reason, and the voice of duty, to provide liberally and efficiently for Popular Instruction.

An ignorant people would not long retain, if by chance, they should acquire civil liberty, and would never rightly appreciate its benefits. To the intelligence of those who have preceded us, are we mainly indebted for our free institutions, and all the blessings that attend them; and it is only upon the intelligence of those who must be the future guardians of these institutions, that we can confidently rest our hopes of having them perpetuated and improved. Popular education is, therefore, identified with civil liberty. We owe to both, the devotion of our best faculties, and the wisest application of the means placed at our disposal, for sustaining and promoting them.

In anticipation of the income to be derived from the moneys belonging to the United States, deposited with this state, a recommendation was submitted to the last legislature, to apply it, exclusively, to the purposes of education. This income was then estimated at \$300,000, annually, during the time the deposit should remain with the state. The plan proposed for the appropriation of this sum was, to increase the annual distribution to the common schools to twice the present sum, thereby making \$220,000; to devote a liberal portion of it to the academies, in such a manner, as not only to increase the amount annually distributed to them, but to augment the Literature fund, and to add the remainder to the capital of the common school fund. The general proposition, of applying this income to the cause of education, appears to have been coincident with public opinion; and I do not doubt that it will receive your sanction. Though I should regret to see the least departure from the generally approved suggestion of appropriating this income exclusively to the purposes of education, yet it is not improbable that some useful modifications may be made in the details of the plan. There are, undoubtedly, other objects connected, directly, with education, besides those already specified, to which pecuniary assistance might be extended with great advantage.

Elementary instruction is only the first stage in the progress of education, and but little is accomplished, if there be no advance beyond it. To make ample provision, for conducting all the children in the state through this stage, should undoubtedly continue to be, as it hitherto has been, the first and main object of the legislature; yet, all that public sentiment demands, and the public good requires, will not be achieved until needful facilities are furnished, to a career of self-instruction. District libraries are well calculated to exert a beneficial influence, in this respect. It is to be regretted, that the opportunity offered to the school districts, for establishing them has not been embraced with a zeal commensurate to their importance. Few of the districts, compared with the whole number in the state, have manifested a willingness to levy the small sum authorized by law, for the purpose of establishing them. In view of their unquestionable usefulness, I would respectfully recommend, that some further measures be adopted, for introducing them more generally into the districts.

The law now authorizes the inhabitants of each district, at their option, to raise, the first year, \$20, for establishing a

library, and \$10 in each subsequent year, for enlarging it.—Two modes present themselves for advancing this laudable object. One is to make the assessment of the tax compulsory; and the other, to devote a small amount of the fund now at your disposal, to each district, which shall raise by taxation an equal amount, for the establishment of a district library.

"I recommend to your favorable consideration, the latter mode, under a belief, that it would meet with more general approbation than a compulsory assessment, and enlist an interest in behalf of those establishments, that will not only insure the ultimate introduction of them into the several school districts, but increase their usefulness."

This portion of Gov. Marcy's message, together with sundry petitions was referred to the committee on colleges, and common schools, of which the Hon. D. D. Barnard, now a member of congress, was chairman. The report from his pen is one of the ablest papers on common school education which we have seen. We extract what relates to district Libraries.

"We propose to make the establishment of district libraries, heretofore attempted in this State by a law of 1835, imperative and certain, as prayed for by various petitions before us. The law, as it now stands, *authorizes* each district to tax itself for this object—\$20 the first year and \$10 every year afterwards.

We propose that the same sums shall still be realized for these objects; but that the state shall furnish half; while it shall be the duty of the districts, without choice, to tax their own property for the remainder.

The law as it now stands has been nearly a nullity. We can hear of but few, exceedingly few districts, who have availed themselves of its provisions. Some solitary libraries, however, have been established after great efforts and sacrifices on the part of individuals; and from these we have the most satisfactory testimony that the benefits flowing from them have exceeded the highest expectations of the most sanguine advocates of the plan.

To secure the benefits of these libraries to all, we are entirely satisfied that it is indispensable to make the levying of the tax on the districts compulsory; but while the State commands in this matter, as it ought to, we think it should also show a becoming liberality; and this it will do by appropriating more than \$100,000 the first year to the single object.

The committee would not disguise that they regard the establishment of these libraries as a thing of the very last consequence; and if refused by the Legislature, they are free to confess that they shall look to all substantial improvement in the common school system, as something rather to be despaired of than to be expected or hoped for.

With these libraries in possession, it is calculated, on proper and sufficient data, that below seven and eight millions of volumes of books will at once be brought into use and perusal in this State, where now scarcely a book is read; and that seven or eight hundred thousand persons, male and female, young and old, will become attentive and instructed readers, of whom scarcely one is now entitled to the name of reader. Who can undertake to compute the sum of benefits arising from such a condition of things?—the intellectual tastes and habits that may be formed—the new sympathies springing up between parent and child—the desertion of old haunts of dissipation and old habits of vice—the new and swarming births of thought and fancy that must occur—the occasional discoveries which genies may make of itself and its wonderful powers and impulses—the passions that shall be calmed—the differences that shall be healed—the broils that shall be quieted and allayed—the families, and neighborhoods, and country that shall be blessed—who can contemplate all this, and more that might be thought of and not tremble, as a man and a patriot, with the apprehension lest the country should lose, or fail, through any cause, to realize benefits so immense and so indispensable?

It will be seen that the committee place great reliance on the establishment of district libraries, in their influence on both parents and children, as a principal means of leading to the employment of competent teachers."

The recommendations of Gov. Marcy, and the committee of the Legislature, and thus a new and most important instrument of popular education was placed within the reach of school districts. The magnitude of this enterprise is thus illustrated in the Journal of Commerce.

"At the last session of the Legislature of this State, a bill was passed extending the appropriation, from the income of the U. S. Deposite Fund, for the purchase of District School Libraries, to *five* years instead of *three*, the term specified in the Library Law of the preceding session. This amendment will require the expenditure for School Libraries, in the single State of New York, during the

years 1839 to 1843 inclusive, of *five hundred and fifty thousand (\$550,000) dollars*

This sum should give circulation to more than *eighteen hundred thousand (1,800,000) volumes*.

The immense magnitude and importance of this result will appear from the following comparisons.

The entire annual issues of *new books*, in all Great Britain, according to McCulloch, author of the *Dictionary of Commerce*, and whose authority in such statistics ranks eminently high, is estimated at 1,125,000 volumes,—several hundred thousand volumes less than this Library Law of the State of New York will require.

There are in the United States about *two hundred* public Libraries, connected with Universities, Colleges, College Societies, Theological Seminaries, and with literary, scientific and other public institutions in our cities and large towns, containing an aggregate of 660,000 volumes. So that this appropriation of the public funds will require the purchase, previous to 1843, in the State of New York of more than *three times* as many books as are now contained in all the public Libraries of the United States.

It is stated that there are, at least, 50,000 public schools in the U. States. There is also a very large number of private schools, academies, and other seminaries, that would be equally benefitted by a "School Library," and would readily introduce it.

But even should the policy of New York be generally adopted for the *public schools only*, its operation will develop results, which the following statement may assist us, in some measure to appreciate.

The Library Law of New York appropriates a little more than \$10 a year, on the average, to each school, for the purchase and annual increase of the library. This sum applied in behalf of each of our 50,000 public schools, would amount in *five years* to \$2,500,000,—an expenditure which would purchase, at the price established by the Library already alluded to, at least 7,500,000 volumes.

The American Bible Society has printed during 23 years past, nearly 2,500,000 copies of the Bible and Testament. This library system, already adopted by several of the States, if adopted by all will circulate in *five years* more than *three times* as many books in our own country, as the Am. Bible Society has distributed copies of the word of God in *twenty-three* years, over the whole world.

The British and Foreign Bible Society, during *thirty-four* years of most extensive operations, sustained by the benevolence and wealth of the British empire, has distributed over the whole world more than 10,000,000 of Bibles and Testaments. The American School Library System promises to give circulation, in *five years* to more than two thirds as many books in our own country, as that gigantic Institution has distributed the copies of the word of God.

There are in Europe, *thirty* principal Libraries containing from 100,000 to 400,000 volumes each:

The Royal Library of Paris	400,000 vols.
The Library of Munich	400,000
" " of the Vatican	360,000
The Imperial, at St. Petersburg	300,000
" " at Vienna	300,000
" Royal at Copenhagen	260,000
" " at Dresden	250,000
" British Museum	20,000

—and *twenty* others, ranging in size from 200,000 to 10,000 volumes each, comprising a grand aggregate of 5,797,000 volumes.

If the example of New York is followed by all the other States, the supply of our 50,000 schools, in *five years*, will amount to 7,500,000 volumes. It thus appears, that the American School Library system affords every promise of soon distributing, as it were broadcast, over our whole country in the form of circulating libraries, specially designed for the youth of the nation but free and accessible to the great mass of the population, young and old, a number of volumes, nearly *one third* greater than the grand total of *thirty* of the largest libraries of Europe, some of which have been, for four centuries, accumulating.

The total benevolent income, during the last year of the American Bible Society, of the American Board of Foreign Missions, of the American Tract Society, of the American Education and Home Missionary Societies, united, was \$569,000.

The expenditure of public funds in the State of N. Y. alone, for School Libraries, during *five years* to come, will amount, within a fraction, to the aggregate of all the income of those institutions, during the year past.

It is impossible to repress one's emotions, in view of the vast, stupendous results which are so rapidly developing by this Library System.

Here is the beginning of an enterprise,—of a system of operations for the social, intellectual and moral improvement of our country, of truly incalculable moment. Is it possible to overstate the magnitude and importance of this opening source of influence and power? It will exert a most essential, if not a controlling, influence over the education, the opinions, the feelings, and the habits of the next generation of our countrymen.